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China may attend Mideast multilaterals

HONG KONG (AP) — China and Israel are expected to establish diplomatic ties at the end of January, and China will be invited to participate in the Middle East peace conference, a magazine reported. The Far Eastern Economic Review, in issues appearing Thursday, reported that Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy is to fly to Beijing on Jan. 22 for a stay in China of at least five days. It said Mr. Levy will then travel to Moscow. The report said that during his stay in China, formal ties will be announced at the ambassadorial level. Mr. Levy also is expected to clear the way for Beijing's participation in the multilateral Middle East peace talks, it added. The talks are scheduled in Moscow, also at the end of this month. There was no way to immediately confirm the report, but China and Israel have been moving towards establishing ties for the past few years. Last year, Yasser Arafat, head of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), had asked for Chinese participation in the Middle East talks. China most recently joined the U.N. Security Council in condemning Israeli moves to expel 12 Palestinians from the occupied territories.

Greek court jails Palestinian

KORYDALLOS, Greece (AP) — A court Wednesday sentenced Mohammed Rashid, a Palestinian, to 18 years in prison after finding him guilty of the 1982 bombing of a Pan Am jetliner in which a Japanese was killed and 15 passengers injured. The three-judge court ruled 2-1 that Mr. Rashid was guilty of premeditated murder and planting explosives aboard an airliner. "I have to mention that one member of the court dissented because he thought there was not enough evidence for a conviction," court President Apostolos Karagiannopoulos said. He announced the sentence at the close of the three-month trial held in the maximum security Korydallos prison. Mr. Karagiannopoulos said Mr. Rashid will be expelled from Greece after serving his sentence. The bomb exploded while the jet was flying from Tokyo to Hawaii, Aug. 11, 1982. "The decision is political and in essence condemns the Palestinian struggle," an impassive Rashid told reporters. "I was simply the scapegoat of United States pressure," Mr. Rashid, 41, immediately appealed the verdict and sentence to a higher court. His lawyers said the appeals trial will probably be held within five months.

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Carey fears Jerusalem becoming a Disneyland

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — The Archbishop of Canterbury said on Wednesday the Holy Land could be reduced to a Christian Disneyland. My fear will be that in 15 years Jerusalem, Bethlehem — once centres of strong Christian presence — might become a kind of Walt Disney Christian theme park," said Archbishop George Carey, spiritual head of the Church of England and the world's 70 million Anglicans. "We mustn't allow that to happen," he told reporters during a Middle East fact-finding tour. He earlier visited Jordan. "Because of the political situation many, many Christians are now moving to the West. They feel a sense of despair." He had raised the issue with Israeli and Palestinian leaders. The Anglican bishop of Jerusalem, Samir Kaffiyeh, said the biggest emigration followed Israel's occupation of Arab East Jerusalem in the 1967 war.

O'Connor briefs Pope on Mideast trip

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Cardinal John O'Connor of New York met with Pope John Paul II on Wednesday after an 11-day swing through the Middle East. "In all of his contacts the cardinal took note of the new situation emerging in the Middle East and acknowledged the great desire for peace that exists and the recognition that there will not be peace unless there is justice," a Vatican statement said. The New York archbishop visited Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, Israel and the occupied territories. During his visit, Cardinal O'Connor told Israeli leaders that relations between the Holy See and the Jewish state were warming and that the Vatican could play the role of peacemaker in the Middle East. The Vatican statement did not mention those issues. Jewish groups have repeatedly complained to the Pope about the Vatican's failure to grant formal diplomatic recognition to Israel.

Israeli jets stage mock Lebanon raids

SIDON, Lebanon (R) — Israeli aircraft staged mock raids over Palestinian refugee camps in South Lebanon on Wednesday, security sources said. They said three Israeli F-16 jets swooped over the 'Ain Al Hilweh and Mich Mich Palestinian refugee camps east of the port town of Sidon, 40 kilometres south of Beirut. The planes also flew over the Iqim Al Toubah region where the pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God) groups has bases.

Pakistan rejects U.S. human rights charge

ISLAMABAD (R) — Pakistan on Wednesday rejected charges by a U.S. official of human rights violations in the troubled southern province of Sind. The charge by U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Teresa Schaffer was levelled "without viewing the objective conditions on the ground," a Foreign Ministry statement said. In an interview with the U.S. Information Service released by the U.S. embassy in Islamabad on Saturday, Mr. Schaffer said the Sind provincial government had used ethnic disturbances as part of a political vendetta against its opponents.

Carter, Shevardnadze to chair conference

ATLANTA (AP) — Former President Jimmy Carter and former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze will preside over a conference of 200 world figures seeking ways to end eight continuing conflicts. The group, also including former U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar and two Nobel Peace prize laureates, Oscar Arias and Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu, will gather at the Carter Presidential Centre for three days next week. The conference, closed to the public, will discuss conflicts in Afghanistan, Angola, Burma, Cambodia, Cyprus, Korea, Liberia and Sudan. It is the first meeting of Mr. Carter's International Negotiating Network.

Delegates head for Washington today

Negotiators hopeful of strong U.S. role

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to peace talks with Israel leaves for Washington Thursday after a five-day delay in protest over the Jewish state's decision to expel 12 Palestinians from the occupied territories.

The departure of the delegation was announced by Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber in Amman and Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi in occupied Jerusalem ahead of the Palestinian delegates' trip to the Jordanian capital Wednesday.

The Palestinian and Jordanian teams as well as the Syrian and Lebanese delegations had put on hold the Washington talks — the third session of Arab-Israeli peace talks — scheduled to begin Jan. 7 demanding international action on the Israeli expulsion decision, which the Jewish state refused to repeal.

The U.N. Security Council, with full American backing, ended the impasse by adopting a resolution strongly condemning the Israeli move and calling on the Jewish state to rescind its decision.

Press access sought to Israeli expulsion hearings

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Twelve Palestinians whose expulsion by Israel jeopardised Middle East peace talks asked the high court Wednesday to order that reporters could attend their appeal.

Justice ministry spokeswoman Etty Eshed said they asked the court to suspend the appeal proceedings before a military tribunal pending a ruling on their petition, which the court will hear on Friday and Sunday.

Israel's expulsion order last week followed the killing of a fourth Israeli in the occupied territories since October. It led Arab negotiators to delay leaving for the Washington talks which had been due to resume on Tuesday.

The Palestinian team finally left on Wednesday after the U.N. Security Council strongly condemned the Israeli move.

The military appeal panel on Monday rejected requests to open hearings to the press. Military sources said this was to prevent disclosure of classified material.

But Palestinian lawyers argued in their petition that classified evidence was not revealed, expulsion was a political measure and a news ban violated the public's right to know.

Israel's army chief of staff has proposed limiting Palestinian expulsion to 18 months to quiet world criticism of the practice.

Ehud Barak told a parliament committee that a time limit also could facilitate more expulsions because the penalty would be less severe than the government's current policy of issuing open-ended expulsion orders (see page 2).

Also Wednesday, visiting Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey criticised expulsion as "rough justice" and unfair.

The Palestinians slated for expulsion are not accused of playing a role in fatal attacks but of unspecified "anti-Israeli activity." Eight are from the Gaza Strip and four from the West Bank.

Arabs accused of "anti-Israeli activity" currently face open-ended expulsion orders, and few have ever been allowed to return to their homes.

Dr. Carey, the spiritual head of

The American support for the resolution was widely welcomed by the Arab sides to peace talks with Israel, and Palestinian delegates Wednesday expressed hope that Washington would continue to display the same seriousness and determination when it comes to substantial issues in the Middle East negotiations.

Israel, which sent its delegates ahead to Washington for the talks scheduled on Jan. 7 and angrily rejected the U.N. condemnation, also sought to harass the Palestinian delegates as they crossed the River Jordan Wednesday, members of the delegation said.

They said Israeli officials at the bridge tried to prevent three "media and administrative staff" related to the delegation. It took three hours wrangling and negotiations, during which the entire Palestinian delegation threatened to call off the trip and return to the occupied territories.

before the problem was resolved with intervention from the diplomatic mission of the U.S. and Russia — the co-sponsors of the Middle East peace process.

"Exit permits were shortly given to all the members and we crossed the bridge after three hours and a half of waiting," one of the delegates said. The three Palestinians were identified as Hatem Abdul Qader, Bilal Al Natsheh and Tawfiq Barghouti.

The Palestinians, together with

Jordanian delegation, were expressed to leave for Washington via a European capital this morning.

Palestinian spokeswoman Ashrawi, told reporters in occupied Jerusalem that there was "a good chance" talks would quickly move from procedural matters to substance.

Dr. Ghassan Khatib, a senior Palestinian delegation member, told the Jordan Times that renewed American support and active interest in the Middle East peace talks has contributed to the Palestinian decision to continue the drive for peace.

Dr. Khatib said that a number of factors on the international political arena as well as in developments in the internal Israeli political system have encouraged Palestinians to believe that matters could move to the advantage of Arabs.

He said that Israel's tactic of "continuous offensive" has backfired when the world strongly condemned its decision to continue its policy of expulsion.

But a senior Israeli official said this latest round of talks could be short-lived since the Israeli delegates had informed the United States that they intended to return to Israel on the evening of Jan. 15.

That would leave room for only four days of negotiations at the most. The talks were supposed to have resumed on Tuesday but Arab delegates delayed coming to protest against Israel's decision to expel 12 Palestinians from the occupied territories.

The United States engineered a unanimous vote in the U.N. Security Council on Monday "strongly condemning" the expulsions — a vote that sparked resentment in the Jewish state.

In another development which angered Israel, the State Department said it had decided to grant a U.S. entry visa to Nabil Shaath of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), a top political advisor to PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, so that Mr. Shaath could address a meeting of Arab Americans in Washington.

Dr. Shaath advised the Palestinian Margaret Tutwiler said no U.S. officials would meet Mr. Shaath and the United States had no plans to resume its dialogue with the PLO.

"We have already registered our unhappiness... we think it wasn't necessary," said a senior Israeli official.

Ms. Tutwiler expressed disappointment at the delay in the peace talks and urged Arabs to rejoin them as quickly as possible.

The Syrians met with PLO officials in Damascus and announced Tuesday

night that all Arab delegates would return to Washington within two days.

The Israeli delegates, claiming frustration that the Arab side failed to appear for Tuesday's scheduled resumption of the negotiations, suggested the Arabs get a move on or they would go home. A month ago, however, it was the Israeli side that showed up nearly a week late.

"There's a limit to what we can swallow," said Yossi Ben Aharon, one of the Israeli team leaders. "We might just decide we had enough, pack up and leave," said Mr. Ben Aharon in a conversation with reporters.

Some 70 Israeli negotiators and support staff arrived early Monday. Israeli negotiators expected that once the Security Council resolution passed, the four Arab teams would immediately leave for Washington.

The situation now is the exact opposite of the first round of direct talks between the sides last month — when the Arabs arrived on time and

(Continued on page 5)

Massive troop moves reported in Algeria

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Extensive movements of troops and police were reported Wednesday, one week before Algerian voters were expected to give Islamic fundamentalists control of the nation's parliament.

Algeria's Soviet-trained army leadership is hostile to the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front, known by its French initials FIS. Algerian media have speculated that the army might intervene to prevent the party from taking power.

Since the first-round voting Dec. 26, FIS spokesmen have urged the army to "protect the people's choice."

In an apparent attempt to soothe the generals, the fundamentalists have moderated their rhetoric while continuing to promise to run the country by strict Islamic law (see page 2).

But on Wednesday, a nervous fundamentalist leadership reported the deployment of troops.

"Extensive movements of police and army soldiers have been noted during the last few hours in the majority of the country's regions," FIS leader Abdul Kader Hachani told reporters at a news conference in the capital. He said the deployments in-

cluded districts where there will be no run-off. He provided no other details.

Second-round parliamentary voting is set for Jan. 16. The election is Algeria's first free, multi-party legislative voting since independence from France in 1962.

The FIS won 188 of the 231 seats decided in the first round. That is just 28 short of a majority in the 430-seat parliament and is seven times the number won by the second-place party.

The remaining 199 seats will be decided in the run-off. Most of these match candidates of the FIS and the ruling National Liberation Front (FLN), which won only 15 seats in the first round. The fundamentalists are expected to win most of the remaining seats.

Diplomats said at the weekend that tanks and other units moved into positions around the capital last Thursday — one week after the FIS swept to its commanding lead in the first round of elections.

"We want to know what justification there is for this deployment. If it is because of the

(Continued on page 5)

Bush collapses over state dinner; said to have flu

TOKYO (AP) — U.S. President George Bush collapsed Wednesday night during a state dinner, apparently from stomach flu. "I feel good," an ashen Bush said, but he went to bed early and planned to resume rigorous trade talks with Japanese officials Thursday.

White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said Mr. Bush felt nauseous before the state dinner hosted by Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa. At about 8:20 p.m. (11:20 GMT) the president vomited and collapsed.

Physicians and Secret Service agents sprang to the president's side, and he left a few minutes later for Akasaka Palace, where he is staying.

"I feel good," Mr. Bush said, though he appeared haggard and dishevelled as he was escorted to his limousine. He walked slowly, closely surrounded by security agents.

The 67-year-old president went to sleep after taking medication for nausea, officials said.

The White House said Mr. Bush would skip a breakfast meeting on Thursday but otherwise would stick by his schedule, which calls for a full round of meetings and a news conference. He was to return to Washington on Friday after a 12-day

journey through Australia and Asia.

Television pictures showed a frightening picture of Mr. Bush in extreme distress. Mr. Bush vomited at his seat and was helped to the floor by Secret Service agents, spokesman Fitzwater said. He said the president was in a "faint condition."

Mr. Bush appeared disoriented, his mouth agape. A Secret Service agent leaped over the table and knelt beside the president, prone on the floor. Other agents rushed to positions around the president, motioning guests away.

Mrs. Bush jumped from her chair at the head table and moved towards the president but stopped several feet away, a worried look on her face. Mr. Bush remained on the floor "a few minutes," Mr. Fitzwater said.

Standing on his own, Mr. Bush was wrapped in a coat. Smiling, he raised his hand in a salute to the audience and shook hands with Mr. Miyazawa and left. Guests stood and applauded as he departed.

"I just wanted to get a little attention," Mr. Bush joked, according to Mr. Fitzwater. Although the White House



JORDAN SUFFERS SETBACK: Jordan's Al Ramtha club lost 1-0 to Saudi Arabia's Al Nassr at a match played in Irbid Wednesday

Mideast talks likely to resume next week but may be short-lived

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Middle East peace talks seemed set to reconvene early next week after a United Nations condemnation of Israel cleared the way for Arabs to return to the bargaining table.

But a senior Israeli official said this latest round of talks could be short-lived since the Israeli delegates had informed the United States that they intended to return to Israel on the evening of Jan. 15.

That would leave room for only four days of negotiations at the most. The talks were supposed to have resumed on Tuesday but Arab delegates delayed coming to protest against Israel's decision to expel 12 Palestinians from the occupied territories.

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(Continued on page 5)

EC halts monitoring of operations in Yugoslavia

BELGRADE (Agencies) — The European Community (EC) suspended monitoring operations in Yugoslavia on Wednesday after a federal warplane shot down an EC helicopter, killing all five observers on board.

The action was not expected to have much effect on the observance of a five-day-old truce that was mediated by the United Nations.

The truce, the longest period of relative peace during the six-month-old civil war in Croatia, was reported still holding Wednesday along most of the 600-kilometre front despite several isolated incidents. No casualties were reported.

Portugal, the current EC president, said the activities of the EC monitoring teams would be halted until the Serb-dominated federal armed forces and Croatian officials could guarantee their safety.

Teotónio Pereira, a spokesman for the Portuguese Foreign Ministry in Lisbon, said the EC also wanted impartial investigators to participate in an inquiry into Tuesday's incident promised by Yugoslav authorities.

Yugoslav federal leaders, who admitted that a federal MiG-21 had shot down the helicopter on Tuesday, expressed relief that the 12-nation EC and the United Nations remained committed to their peace efforts.

But EC mission head Joao Salgueiro in Zagreb said the 200 or so EC monitors were suspending work until they received an explanation of why the helicopter had been shot down and army guarantees for their safety.

He said he hoped this would be achieved at a meeting with the Serb-led army and Croatian authorities, planned for Wednesday morning but delayed.

Four Italian soldiers and a French monitor were killed when their helicopter, bearing EC insignia, was blasted by a missile over Croatia after entering Yugoslav air space from Hungary.

(Continued on page 5)

Analysts see gradual moves towards U.S.-PLO dialogue

By Marianne M. Shabin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — As the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation prepared for the third round of the bilateral Arab-Israeli peace talks in Washington, the American administration reassured that it would not hold official talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) officials expected to visit the American capital this week.

While the American government granted a visa to senior PLO advisor Nabil Shaath, State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler Tuesday said that U.S. officials would not be meeting with Mr. Shaath while he was in Washington.

But the granting of Mr. Shaath's visa was seen in some Palestinian circles as "another step in the score of events leading to the eventual resumption of the American-PLO dialogue."

"The United States and Israel are now convinced that the PLO is the decision-maker in Palestinian politics, regardless of who does the actual talking," said Palestine National Council (PNC) member Dr. Assad Abdul

Rahman.

"It will be difficult for the Americans to resume a direct dialogue right now. They are taking one step at a time. They are walking slowly," Dr. Abdul Rahman said.

PLO officials are working behind the scenes to resume the dialogue. "We have unofficial contacts with the Americans as we have had for years, nothing has changed," said one PLO official in Amman who preferred anonymity. He added that contacts are being carried out with the U.S. mission to the U.N.

While some diplomatic circles are pressing for a resumption of a PLO-U.S. dialogue, Palestinian observers believe that changes will have to occur in the domestic American political scene before such a dialogue can be resumed.

"The Europeans are exerting a lot of pressure, but it is unlikely that the U.S. will resume the dialogue before George Bush guarantees that a dog-fight with the Zionist lobby in Congress will not make him lose the elections," said Dr. Abdul Rahman.

The U.S. vote in favour of the

(Continued on page 5)

Iraq, U.N. open oil sale talks

VIENNA (Agencies) — United Nations officials opened talks in Vienna on Wednesday with an Iraqi delegation seeking looser conditions for a resumption of oil exports to fund purchases of vital imports such as food and medicine.

In September, the United Nations agreed that Iraq, still under trade sanctions imposed for its invasion of Kuwait in August, 1990, could export \$1.6 billion worth of oil.

But Baghdad has complained that the terms attached were too stringent and were unacceptable. "We are master of our own natural resources and the decision should be Iraq's, without any shackles," said Abdul Amir Al Anbari, head of Iraq's delegation to the talks who is also the country's permanent representative at the United Nations.

"All we ask is that the regulations and conditions of the oil sales are compatible with the realities of the oil industry," he added.

After a morning session, Mr. Anbari said both sides would have to report back to the U.N. and Baghdad respectively before any decision were taken.

"Anything that is reached will be by referendum — a joint agreement between the Security Council and the Iraqi government," he said, stressing the talks were preparatory and technical.

Iraq meanwhile accused Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) of flooding the oil market and keeping prices low "in service of the U.S. economy."

"Saudi Arabia and the Emirates are committed to the service of the U.S. economy against the

interests of the petroleum producing countries," Oil Minister Usama Al Hiti told the government newspaper Al Jumhuriya.

"Saudi Arabia is producing the maximum that could be produced at the present time. It has flooded the oil market beyond international demand and other countries, such as the UAE, have adopted the same malicious course," he said.

The minister said the government had not changed its "firm position" rejecting U.N. Security Council resolutions 706 and 712 regarding the proposed limited oil exports.

The Vienna talks were scheduled to finish on Thursday but U.N. officials believe they could continue into Friday.

Key among the details Bagh-

(Continued on page 5)

House passes law on exchanges

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament Wednesday approved a draft law on exchange houses in the Kingdom to clear the way for resumed free-market foreign currency dealings by private operators after a hiatus of 35 months.

In technical terms, the House approved a temporary law of 1976 which established exchange houses in the Kingdom and a 1989 repeal of the 1976 law and endorsed the new legislation drafted in 1990, one year after the government of Zeid Rifai ordered the 68 moneychangers in Jordan closed down and liquidated.

Under the provisions of the new law, which now goes before the Upper House (Senate), moneychangers could be licensed by the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) with a minimum capital of JD 250,000 for a general partnership company, JD 500,000 for a limited partnership and JD 1 million for a public shareholding company.

In addition, small operators could open exchange houses near Jordan's land borders with a minimum capital of JD 100,000. In all cases, 30 per cent of the capital should be deposited with the CBJ either in the form of a bank guarantee from or a deposit with a commercial bank.

In addition to the regulatory function of changing foreign currency in cash, moneychangers can also transfer money abroad to finance medical treatment and education for Jordanians as well as for tourism under the regulations laid down by the CBJ, which will also set the tax and licensing fee for the exchange houses.

The exchange houses can accept properly accounted remittances from abroad.

The law provides for punishment of one month to six months in jail, a fine between JD 5,000 and JD 10,000 and cancellation of the licences for repeated violations of the law's provisions despite CBJ warnings.

The CBJ is also empowered to audit the books of accounts of any moneychanger at any time it chooses and to close down the operation of a firm for a period not exceeding 15 days if such action was deemed necessary.

"The law has enough provisions to protect the client and safeguard the financial and monetary health of the market," House Legal Committee head Hussein Mijalli was quoted as saying by Reuters.

"It will prevent the occurrence of previous malpractices."

In its closure order against moneychangers issued in February 1989, the then government accused the exchange houses of speculating in the Jordanian dinar, accepting deposits from the public and transferring money abroad in violation of CBJ regulations.

The closure order was issued at

(Continued on page 5)

Experts see Iran trying to restore military might

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Iran is engaged in an ambitious programme to rebuild its military in a bid to become the supreme power in the Gulf region, government and private experts said Tuesday.

"We are aware that Iran has been seeking to rebuild its military establishment, which was decimated during the Iran-Iraq war," State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said.

James Phillips, of the Heritage Foundation, a private research group, said the Iranians "have been working very hard to rebuild their army." He said Iran has purchased tanks, artillery pieces and Scud missiles from North Korea and F-7 jet fighters from China.

The Los Angeles Times said in Tuesday's editions that Iran's purchases include Soviet SU-24 fighter-bombers, MiG-29 fighter planes, tanks, missiles and other sophisticated weapons, as well as "nuclear research."

The buildup has given Iran parity with Iraq, long the region's leading power, the newspaper quoted intelligence sources as saying.

Cash-strapped Russia is selling Iran arms from the Red Army's inventory to obtain foreign exchange. The Times said.

"It's a cash-and-carry deal at cut-rate prices, and arms bazaar are sprouting up all over the place," one source said. The newspaper said rumours in Washington intelligence circles are that multimillion-dollar T-72

tanks have sold for as little as \$50,000.

Ms. Tutwiler said the interests of peace and stability in the region are best served by reducing arms flows and not by massive build-ups.

"The Iranian government is well aware of our concerns about the proliferation of all kinds of arms, both conventional and weapons of mass destruction," she said.

Mr. Phillips also said there is strong potential for Iran to make deals with some of the fledgling Islamic states which have broken off from the former Soviet Union.

Ms. Tutwiler recalled that Secretary of State James Baker has sought to discourage the four former Soviet republics with nuclear weapons from contributing to build-ups of either conventional or nuclear arms beyond their borders. She said she was not aware of any specific references to Iran during Mr. Baker's discussions.

There have been reports in the Arab press recently about Iranian plans to acquire nuclear weapons but State Department officials said they have been unable to confirm them.

Mr. Phillips said details of the Iranian build-up are sometimes elusive because some of the country's business is carried out by secretive intermediaries.

But, he said, logic suggests the Iranians are hard at work in Eastern Europe as well as the Soviet Union and China, all of

which have ample supplies of weapons and are in dire need of hard currency, which Iran has.

"I'd be surprised if it's not going on," Mr. Phillips said.

Although Russia was providing the bulk of the arms, other shipments were coming from North Korea, Argentina and other countries, the sources said. The Los Angeles Times did not provide details of the other arms shipments.

An unidentified Bush administration official was quoted as saying: "The build-up has been across the board — conventional arms and unconventional in the areas of missiles and nuclear research. Our concern is not just what they are accumulating, but what they plan to do with it."

The official refused to provide details on the nuclear research, but the newspaper pointed out President George Bush and others have said existing controls over Soviet nuclear weapons remain adequate to safeguard against their unauthorised use or diversion.

A U.S. official was quoted as saying Iran was selling oil and gas to the Russians and obtaining money to buy the arms.

Some of the purchases from Russia were part of deals that were consummated with the Soviet Union before its break-up and the resignation of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and other deals were negotiated recently, the newspaper quoted an unidentified U.S. official as saying.

U.S. clears Israel of debt charge

WASHINGTON (AP) — The administration has cleared Israel of accusations that it fell behind in paying its debt to the United States, according to documents obtained Tuesday.

After checking its books, the administration found that "all amounts due AID (the Agency of International Development) under any long-term foreign loans or credits were paid on time. Currently, there are no amounts overdue at all," said the letter from Don Newman, chief of the Loan Management Division at the Treasury Department.

AID, the government agency that disburses foreign aid, also issued a correction saying its previous report which cited Israel as being behind as much as \$679,000 in repayment was "in error." The agency did not explain the source of the mistake.

The letter was obtained by the Associated Press.

Israel had insisted on the corrections after a report issued last fall by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) raised doubts about the country's ability to repay additional loans it is seeking.

Israel has asked the United States to guarantee \$10 billion in loans it wants from commercial banks to help resettle hundreds of thousands of Jews emigrating from the former Soviet Union.

Israeli leaders strongly suggested that the CRS report was leaked to the media last October to torpedo their chances of getting the loan guarantee.

The CRS report said that according to data from the Treasury Department, "Israel's payment record to the United States has not been entirely flawless. In each of the six years under consideration, a portion of debt owed by the Israeli government was 90 days or more overdue at the end of the year." The period in question was from 1986 through 1991.

Not only that, but AID bookkeepers have found that the United States owes Israel's postal authority about \$260,000, said one official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Israel owes the United States \$4.36 billion.

The main thrust of the CRS report was that unless Israel restructures its economy away from centralised control, it risked being unable to meet its economic growth targets and thereby its growing foreign debt.

Barak: Increase expulsions but limit their time

TEL AVIV (AP) — The Israeli army chief of staff suggested Tuesday Israel might increase the number of expulsions but put a time-limit on them to reduce international criticism. Israel television said.

Appearing before the parliament's foreign affairs and defence committee, Lieutenant-General Ehud Barak said expelling someone for a set period would let the measure be used more frequently, the TV said.

The suggestion came following the international outcry and U.N. condemnation of Israel for ordering the expulsion of 12 Palestinians.

Unlike prison sentences, the expulsions are usually open-ended.

"If there was a way to consider expulsions for a limited time, it would open alternatives that are non-existent right now," Mr. Barak told Israel Television.

"Formally, deportation is not exactly a punishment, it is a step taken... to achieve quiet," he said.

Gen. Barak said putting a time limit on deportations would weaken the case of critics who cite the Geneva conventions, which say it is illegal to expel people permanently.

Khaddam pleased with talks with Lebanon leaders

BEIRUT (AP) — Syrian Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam said Tuesday he was satisfied that his talks with Lebanese government leaders have resolved disputes plaguing President Elias Hrawi's government.

Mr. Khaddam said he also discussed the next round of Middle East peace talks in Washington during his seven hours of talks with Lebanese officials.

"I'm going back satisfied with the spirit of responsibility that prevailed during the talks," Mr. Khaddam told reporters before driving back to Syria through snow-covered highways.

He was referring to a dispute between Mr. Hrawi and parliament Speaker Hussein Husseini over executive and legislative powers within the framework of a peace accord brokered by the Arab League in 1989 that halted Lebanon's 15-year civil war.

"The president and the speaker have agreed to settle their opposing viewpoints within the context of national interests," said Mr. Khaddam, Syria's top expert on Lebanese affairs.

Syria is Lebanon's main power

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Kuwait restricts foreign dependants

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait has issued new rules which will drastically limit the number of dependants which expatriate workers can bring into the country. Foreigners working for the government will be able to bring a wife and three children provided they have a monthly salary of over 450 dinars (\$1,580), the Kuwaiti News Agency quoted Interior Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al Jabir Al Sabah as saying. Foreigners employed by private firms will be allowed residence permits for a wife and two children as long as they have a salary of more than 650 dinars (\$2,290) a month. For each additional child both categories will have to pay the government 100 dinars (\$350) a year, the minister said. Only a minority of skilled workers, only Westerners, would have salaries above these levels. Kuwait's population has dwindled to around half the 2.2 million people it had before Iraq invaded in August 1990. Only about 27 per cent were Kuwaitis. The government wants to keep the total at 1.5 million, with the number of Kuwaitis roughly equal to that of foreign workers. Government bodies have been instructed to restrict the number of non-Kuwaitis they employ to about 35 per cent of pre-invasion levels. Most of Kuwait's Palestinians, once the largest foreign community, have left the emirate because they were laid them off. The government has extended by five months a deadline for residence permits for the remaining 50,000 Palestinians, the remnants of what was once a 400,000-strong community, but it is not clear whether they will be allowed to stay.

Iraq gather friends on war anniversary

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq said Tuesday it would hold an international Islamic conference on the anniversary of the Gulf war to counter its Muslim enemies and what it said was biased Western reporting. Religious Affairs Minister Abdullah Fadhil said 450 participants from around the Islamic World would discuss "the continuation of the U.S. aggression, the unjust embargo and the persistent hostile attempts to destabilise... Iraq." The conference would demonstrate that Muslims rejected the anti-Iraqi attitude adopted by the Islamic summit in Senegal last month, he told reporters. The 45-member Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), meeting in Dakar, passed a resolution demanding that economic sanctions on Iraq be maintained. The resolution, formally objected to only by Sudan, marked the bitterness that still divides former Arab allies a year after the Gulf war which drove Iraqi forces from Kuwait. Iraq boycotted the OIC meeting. "We hope the conference will turn into an information forum to break the blockade the U.S. media are imposing on the flow of facts about Iraq," he added.

Iran ready to return Kuwaiti planes — U.N.

NICOSIA (R) — Iran is ready to return six Kuwaiti aircraft flown to safety by Iraq during the Gulf war last year, the head of the U.N. aviation authority has said. International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) President Assad Kofate said in Tehran Tuesday he had visited the Kuwait Airways planes in the eastern city of Mashhad, the Iranian news agency IRNA reported. "Iran is ready to return the six Kuwaiti aircraft to the owner — the Kuwaiti government," it quoted Mr. Kofate as saying. The planes — five Airbus 310-A and one Airbus 300 — were seized by Iraq after it invaded Kuwait in August 1990. They were flown to Iran along with scores of Iraqi civilian and military aircraft when U.S.-led allies launched the Gulf war a year ago. Mr. Kofate held talks with Iranian aviation officials as well as President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati during his week-long visit to Iran. Mr. Rafsanjani, saying Washington had to be held responsible for killing 290 people when its navy blasted an Iran Air Airbus in the Gulf skies in July 1988, urged the ICAO to back Iran's stance. The Montreal-based ICAO rejected a call to condemn the United States when it reviewed the incident in March 1989. "We hope under the new conditions ICAO will be able to take the necessary steps to redress our rights," Tehran Radio quoted Mr. Rafsanjani as telling Mr. Kofate on Tuesday.

California professor using radar scan to locate Dead Sea scrolls

QUMRAN, occupied West Bank (AP) — An American religion professor is using a radar scanner to comb the hills and caves that held the Dead Sea scrolls, seeking more Biblical secrets in hidden places.

The scanner has turned up "promising cavities" where scrolls could be hidden as well as data contradicting established theories about the authors of the ancient manuscripts, says the professor, Robert Eisenman.

But despite the new technology, the chances of success are slim.

"I think there are more manuscripts but we have masses of area here and the ground scan is only covering a small part of that," said Mr. Eisenman, head of religion department at California State University in Long Beach. Israeli officials, dismissing Mr. Eisenman as amateur, denied him permission to dig and said he

can only survey the surface for readings of what's beneath.

The scrolls, discovered by shepherds in the Qumran caves near the Dead Sea in the late 1940s, are among the most important archaeological finds of the century. They shed light on the origins of Christianity and the history of Judaism and include the earliest known texts of the Old Testament.

International debate has raged over the handling of the roughly 800 scrolls. American critics, Mr. Eisenman among them, complain about the slow pace of publication and have demanded that the Israel antiquities authority allow free access to all scholars.

In September, after an American research library allowed access to its photographs of the scrolls, Israeli officials relented and said everyone could review the scrolls.

Mr. Eisenman said Tuesday

that his interest in finding more scrolls began in 1985 when he was a visiting scholar in occupied Jerusalem and was denied access.

"So we said, let's find some of our own," Mr. Eisenman said, standing atop Khirbet Qumran, the ruins of a settlement on the northwestern edge of the Dead Sea where the Essenes are believed to have lived from around 100 B.C.

As he spoke, some of his 25 team members used ropes to lower the scanner, a flat red box with a black antenna that looks much like a vacuum cleaner, down a steep cliff of Khirbet Qumran. As the scanner slid down, a nearby computer screen registered shifting horizontal lines in changing colours.

Gregory Mills, who works for the scanner's U.S. manufacturer, said it has been applied elsewhere, including Egyptian Pyramids.

Islam will cover all facets of life, Algerian fundamentalists say

ALGIERS (AP) — Muslim fundamentalists have affirmed that Islam will govern the schools, the army, aids, sexual morality and all facets of Algerian life when they take over the government.

The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), who appear headed to win control of parliament after first-round elections Dec. 26, Tuesday unveiled a headline, 16-page manifesto aimed at winning new converts.

"Islam is the ideological reference point embracing all aspects of life," the manifesto said. "We will employ freedom of expression to defend the Islamic identity."

The FIS, promised to extend Islamic law to the schools, family law, association between men and women, police, army, factories and farms. It called for reform of government at all levels.

"We will reinforce the faith in women's morality," the manifesto said, a statement interpreted as meaning that women will be kept largely at home required to wear modest dress.

The FIS also intends to "combat the deprivations of liberties considered by religion and confirmed by science to be at high

risk" of acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

Relations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other creditors will be reviewed, and usury forbidden the manifesto said.

The manifesto comes as the party is campaigning to win complete control of the 430-seat National People's Assembly in second-round parliamentary elections Jan. 16.

The FIS captured 188 seats outright in the first round, just 28 short of a majority. The liberal Front for Socialist Forces finished a distant second with 25.

The National Liberation Front (FLN), which ruled Algeria as a single-party Marxist state for three decades, was utterly rejected, winning just 15 seats. Independents won three.

Since the vote, the fundamentalists have been trying to present a moderate face to Algerians and Western countries that they will not institute harsh Iranian-style rule in this North African country.

Acting leader Abdul Kader Hachani, considered a moderate,

has insisted that Algeria will stick by recent free-market economic reforms and that women will not be persecuted.

But the manifesto and exhibits put on by the fundamentalists in the capital appear to contradict some of his promises, signalling that hardliners may be regaining control of the movement.

The French news agency AFP said that one poster affirmed that an Islamic state will be obliged to "propagate the faith inside and outside the country by persuasion or by terror."

Another calls for the killing of apostates while others urge that thieves have their hands amputated and adulterers be stoned to death, AFP reported.

The exhibits also featured tear gas grenade casings from the June crackdown by security forces on fundamentalist unrest that led to at least 55 deaths. It forced President Chadli Benjedid to postpone the original June 27 election date.

The expositions are open to men during the day, women at night, in keeping with Islamic separation of the sexes. Meanwhile, a book containing

the preachings of the leading hardliner, imprisoned FIS Vice-President Ali Belhadj, was allegedly seized at a printing plant, the newspaper Al Chaab reported.

The newspaper reported that gunshots were heard in the area Monday night. There were no details on who seized the book, nor was there any official confirmation.

Several copies of the book, entitled "Writings of a Prisoner" and signed by Mr. Belhadj, were in circulation before the 5,000 printed copies were seized, the newspaper said.

FLN leader Abdul Hamid Mehri called Tuesday on voters to give the parliament "balance," an appeal to vote for the FLN in the second-round balloting.

"The results of the first round do not reflect Algeria's political reality," he said.

Family allowances raised

Algeria will increase child allowances from next month to help families cope with price rises. Under an agreement signed be-

tween the government and the General Union of Algerian Workers, families will receive 200 dinars (about \$9) a month per child instead of 140 dinars (\$6.3).


A payment of 500 dinars (\$22.7) will also be paid to families whose total monthly earnings are 7,000 dinars (\$318) or less.

Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghozali signed the accord late on Tuesday with Abdul Kah Benhamouda, secretary-general of the union which took the initiative in setting up a "Committee to Save Algeria after the first round general election results."

The 500-dinar payment follows government efforts to end most food subsidies under an agreement reached last year with the IMF in return for support in Algeria's efforts to resolve its foreign debt problems.

A World Bank report lists Algeria as a "severely indebted middle income country." It put Algeria's total debt in 1990 at \$26.8 billion with 71.6 per cent owed to commercial banks, and debt servicing taking 52.9 per cent of gross national product.

HAPPY SILVER ANNIVERSARY!



To the two most wonderful parents in the world

It takes awhile to realize what joy it adds to living.

To have two parents who are especially good at giving.

But those who share this blessing will soon know our parents worth.

And wouldn't trade their love and care for anything on earth.

All our love and respect
Your Son and Daughter
Tamer and Tamara
Hassan Shaaban

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 773111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
18:30	Everest Turbo
18:30	Magpy
19:00	News in French
19:15	Cirque
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	The Simpsons
21:10	NBA Basketball
21:40	News in English
22:00	Feature film: "W.J."
PRAYER TIMES	
05:10	Fajr
06:32	(Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:42	Dhuhr
14:28	'Asr
16:52	Maghrib
18:14	'Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedish Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 627825	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terzian Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 625453	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 827981, 685326	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824 and 659232	
Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
It will be partly cloudy and another rise in temperatures will take place. Winds will be southeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.	
Min./max. temp.	
Amman	2 / 19
Aqaba	7 / 20
Deserts	0 / 11
Jordan Valley	4 / 19

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Hussein Haddad	731267
Dr. Fakher Bilel	625778
Dr. Hassan Mansour	748364
Dr. Adnan Zaghloul	896140
Fina pharmacy	661912
Ferdows pharmacy	778336
Al Asema pharmacy	637055
Naiwafa pharmacy	623672
Al Salam pharmacy	636730
Yacoub pharmacy	644945
Shamsi pharmacy	637660
IBRID:	
Dr. Abdul Hameed Ghazalibek	(—)
Al Sharaa pharmacy	(985238)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Yahya Al Tarifi	(—)
Khalifeh pharmacy	985417
EMERGENCIES	
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Immediate	630341
Rescue	199
Fire Brigade Emergency	837772
Rescue Police	192, 621111, 637772
Civil Brigade	891228
Blood Bank	773121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	896390
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	605800
Price Complaints	661176
Water and Sewerage	897467
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	787111
Repairs	623101
Abdullah Telephone Repair	661101
Jordan Television	773111
Radio Jordan	774111

Water Authority	680100
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power	636381
Company	636381
RJ Flight Information	08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport	08-53200
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Ama	642816
Akileh Maternity, J. Ama	642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Mathar, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shamsi	6641714
Shamsi Hospital	669131
University Hospital	845845
Al-Musah Hospital	6672779
The Islamic, Abdali	66812737
Al-Ahl, Abdali	6641646
Italian, Al-Muhajira	7771013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashraf	775111/26
Army, Marka	891611/5
Queen Alia Hospital	602240/50
Amal Hospital	674155
ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	(09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital	(09)902560
IBN SINIA HOSPITAL	(09)986732
Al-Hilwa Modern Hospital	(09)990990
IBRD:	
Princess Basma Hospital	(02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital	(02)272775
Ibn Al-Nafes Hospital	(02)247100
AQABA:	
Princess Haya Hospital	(03)314111
FOR THE TRAVELLER	
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.	
ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
8:15	Sanaa (RJ)
8:15	Riyadh (RJ)
9:30	Aqaba (RJ)
9:30	Cairo (RJ)
9:40	New Delhi (RJ)
DEPARTURES	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
06:15	Beirut (RJ)
07:00	Aqaba (RJ)
08:35	Rome (RJ)
11:30	Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
12:00	Paris (RJ)
12:10	London (RJ)
12:30	Larnaca (RJ)
19:45	Cairo (RJ)
21:00	Abu Dhabi (RJ)
21:00	Jeddah (RJ)
21:00	Bahrain, Doha



JORDANIAN-POLISH TIES REVIEWED: Jordan and Poland Wednesday discussed the Middle East and the situation in eastern Europe following political changes there at the start of a three-day visit to the Kingdom by Polish Deputy Foreign Minister Jan Majewski. Dr. Kamel Abu Jaber, who held the talks with the Polish official, urged Poland to use its influence to pressure Israel into complying with U.N. resolutions and to withdraw from occupied Arab lands, giving the Palestinians their legitimate rights in their homeland. The developments in the Middle East, including the current efforts to bring about an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestine problem, came under discussion at the talks held at the

Foreign Ministry in Amman. The two sides also reviewed ways for promoting Jordanian-Polish economic and trade ties and development in the eastern European region. Upon arriving here earlier Wednesday, Mr. Majewski said his country supported the peace process in the Middle East, noting that his talks with Jordanian officials will cover this question as well as means of promoting Jordanian-Polish relations at all levels. Mr. Majewski said that his country wanted all illegal Israeli measures, including the building of settlements, to stop. The Polish official is accompanied by a senior aide (Petra photo)

As GUVS looks back on busy 1991; official looks forward to 1992 plans

By Nur Sati
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The General Union for Voluntary Societies (GUVS), which invested approximately JD 2 million in various projects during 1991, expects to invest around JD 3.5 million during 1992, the executive president of the organization said Wednesday.

"This year is going to be part of a three-year plan which began in 1991," said Abdullah Al Khatib, GUVS executive president.

GUVS, he said, will continue assisting voluntary societies in local communities with projects which aim to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of such societies. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has contributed \$250,000 to such projects.

Already, GUVS has found its services in great need as it brought in 1992 by helping victims of the recent snowstorm. The storm, bringing the most snow to Jordan in 68 years, left many people stranded and in

immediate need of bare necessities.

Although the Civil Defence Department (CDD) and the Public Security Department (PSD) were praised for their rescue operations by officials and the local press, very little was said about GUVS' work.

"Actually," said Mr. Khatib, "we have unions in districts all over Jordan. We helped by distributing blankets, food, medicine and clothes to the needy families."

At the same time there were about 117 emergency centres throughout the Kingdom which "were on stand-by and prepared to give medical assistance to whoever help," he told the Jordan Times. Some centres, especially in the south where villages are still recovering from the storm, continue to receive assistance from these centres, he said.

Speaking of the organisation's plans for 1992, Mr. Khatib said that GUVS would continue working on its 72 projects executed during the last three years with

the help of USAID and the Development and Industrial Bank.

"We will continue working in the south building small projects for charitable societies and trying to get citizens within these local communities to develop certain skills in order to help themselves," he said.

As part of GUVS' plans to help the disabled, 50 kiosks will be built this year and managed by the handicapped, he said. "This is within the idea of income-generating projects so that families could cover the expense in the local communities," Mr. Khatib said.

Among the order new schemes the organisation will be carrying out is construction of a cancer centre in Irbid which will work in coordination with the Amal Cancer Centre in Amman. GUVS will also design a recreation village in Zay, transfer a centre for occupational therapy from the Farah Rehabilitation Centre, where it was initially established in 1989, to the University of

Jordan to be part of a paramedical programme.

"The United Nations selected this project as one of the top projects worldwide among the non-governmental organisations (which GUVS is classified as) and the project won a prize of \$250,000," according to Mr. Khatib.

During 1991, "we helped execute 172 projects in local communities," Mr. Khatib said. During that busy year, he said, GUVS distributed JD 680,000 among voluntary societies to cover part of the cost of their activities.

In distributing this aid, GUVS help support 178 societies, including 280 kindergartens, 30 nurseries, 326 occupational and rehabilitation centres, 14 orphanages, 44 handicapped centres, four "ageing" centres, 52 schools and educational centres, 27 illiteracy centres and 70 organisations dealing directly with scholarships, helping 350,000 students.

Chamber of Industry welcomes measures to help manufacturers

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Amman Chamber of Industry Wednesday welcomed a government decision to reduce customs duty by 10 per cent on imported fabric and export items used in the clothing industry.

By carrying out this decision, the customs duty on imported fabrics used in the clothing industry will drop to 15 per cent, down from 25 per cent, said the chamber officials in a statement.

The statement expressed appreciation of the government's gesture, noting that such a move was bound to stimulate the clothing manufacturing in Jordan and improve Jordan's competitiveness in foreign markets.

According to the statement, Jordan has 877 clothing factories, employing 8,000 workers on a permanent basis, in addition to a large number of dressmakers working at home in urban and rural areas of the Kingdom.

The government's decision, taken by the Council of Ministers Tuesday evening, was a welcomed gesture to the industrial sector and it is hoped it would be a first step towards further bilateral cooperation, the statement noted.

The statement expressed hope that the government will now respond to the demands of the industrial sector by exempting industrial raw materials from cus-

tom duty so as to give impetus to the expansion of industrial work and to protect the national products from foreign companies' competitiveness which, it said, poses a real threat to the national industry.

The chamber said that the industrialists in Jordan hope that the government will offer the industrial sector further exemptions, benefiting other imports, in order to stimulate the local industry and Jordan's exports to foreign markets.

According to the statement, the chamber has now prepared a list of all items employed in the clothing industry to be sent to the customs office.

DEF announces contribution of JD 56,500 for social projects

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Development and Employment Fund (DEF) Wednesday announced it was making a contribution of JD 56,500 to five income-generating projects in the Irbid region.

The DEF will contribute a sum of JD 48,000, of which JD 8,500 will be in the form of a grant and the rest in easy term loan, to the five charitable societies, according to DEF Director General Abdul Ilah Abu Ayash.

He said that the five projects were expected to create jobs for 46 citizens, each earning no less than JD 60 a month.

Dr. Abu Ayash told the Jordan News agency, Petra, that the first project to which the DEF will contribute JD 11,000 is for a dressmaking unit at the Islamic Society offering jobs to 12 people.

The second, to which the DEF will contribute JD 12,000, is for a woodwork unit for the Tamim Charitable Society to create three jobs.

The third, to which the DEF will contribute JD 11,000, is for a tricot unit for the Bushra Charitable Society, creating jobs for 12 people.

The fourth, to which the DEF will offer JD 10,000, is for a dressmaking unit for the Abu Obeida Charitable Society, to create jobs for 12 women.

The fifth project to which the DEF will contribute JD 4,000, is for a bakery for the Amal Special Education Society to create jobs for seven people.

Furthermore, Dr. Abu Ayash announced that the fund was organising training courses for the benefit of those responsible for the charitable organisations in cooperation with the Vocational Training Corporation and the Jordan Institute of Public Administration as well as the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) and local universities.

The DEF, created by the Ministry of Planning to help absorb unemployed people, out-

lined its main services and objectives in a working paper submitted to a meeting in Amman last month by Dr. Abu Ayash.

In the paper, Dr. Abu Ayash outlined the DEF's contributions toward solving the issue of unemployment in the Kingdom.

Although the DEF was established to tackle some aspects of the poverty problems by supporting income- and job-creating projects for the poor, it also gave the opportunity for the poor returnees to benefit from its lending programme, the paper noted.

According to Dr. Abu Ayash, the beneficiaries are target groups including poor families and individuals meeting the following criteria:

- the poor of a family with monthly income less than JD 120;
- unemployed individuals with specific professions or skills;
- owners of existing small enterprises wishing to expand;

Central operation room established to deal with weather problems

AMMAN (J.T.) — A central operation room to deal with emergencies resulting from weather conditions will be created at the Civil Defence Department (CDD) in Amman, according to an announcement by Amman Governor Issa Al Omari.

The central operations room will provide essential information about the general conditions in the capital and feed directives and information to smaller centres around the capital to deal with any emergency, said Mr. Omari following a meeting he chaired in his office to discuss the consequences of the past snowstorm.

He said that priority will be given in future storms to the reopening of roads in cooperation with the Amman Municipality and the Ministry of Public Works.

Mr. Omari said that the Amman Municipality has been requested to supply an enlarged map for the Amman area clearly outlining vital installations and main service centres.

He said that directors of various services required to offer assistance during such emergencies will meet Sunday to follow up questions related to preparations that should be taken to deal with any emergency.

Those attending Wednesday's meeting with the governor represented the ministries of public works, supply, water and irrigation, and social development as well as the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC), the Public Security Department (PSD) and the Jordan Electric Power Company (JEPCO).

Meanwhile, reports from the south indicate that teams were still working to restore vital services and open roads blocked by snow. Tafleeh Governor Khaled Bawaliz told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the Armed Forces, the PSD and the Ministry of Public Works plus the private sector are all joining hands to carry out the vital services.

So far, 200 kilometres of main and side roads have been re-

opened within the Tafleeh Governorate, Mr. Bawaliz said.

Electricity and water teams were also working around the clock to restore services to areas isolated by snow, he said.

According to the governor, several poultry farms and olive orchards were affected by the storm and a special committee is to conduct an assessment of the losses.

In Karak, Jihad Saqarat, director of the maintenance units at the Water Authority in the region, said that the snowstorm and the subsequent frost caused a great deal of damage to the water network in Karak Governorate.

His teams, he said, were hard at work restoring water supplies to homes and replacing broken parts.

The director of the electricity unit said that emergency teams were working hard to restore power supplies.

According to the Civil Defence Department (CDD), the total

number of incidents recorded by the department between the last day of 1991 until Monday was 1,680. These, the CDD said, included 50 fires in Amman, Irbid, Balqa, Karak, Maan, Tafleeh, Mafrqa, Zarqa and Aqaba.

He said a total of 342 fires were dealt with by the CDD last year resulting from mishandling of the gas cylinders at home.

CDD Director General Afif Al Ghoul commented on the past week's snowstorm by saying his men received a helping hand from all citizens in various parts affected by the snowstorm.

He urged citizens to increase their cooperation with the CDD, especially under severe weather conditions and noted that CDD men will be ready to offer assistance any time they receive calls for help on telephone numbers 198,199 and 197.

He also urged citizens to take all precautionary measures to deal with first aid and fire cases at home.

Jordan's ambassador to U.N. applauds passage of Resolution 726

NEW YORK (J.T.) — U.N. Security Council Resolution 726, which strongly condemned Israel's decision to expel 12 Palestinians from the occupied territories, reflected the world community's deep worry and dismay at the Israeli government's position with regard to its inhuman treatment of the Palestinian people, according to Jordan's U.N. Ambassador Abdullah Salah.

The quick reaction on the part of the U.N. Security Council to

the Israeli move as well as the strongly-worded resolution reflect the world community's total rejection of Israel's continued intransigence and its repressive policies and measures practiced in the occupied Arab lands, Mr. Salah noted in a statement carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

He said that the condemnation came at a time when efforts are underway to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict and end the Palestine problem.

The Security Council Monday delivered its strongest protest ever at Israel over the planned expulsion of the 12 Palestinians, condemning the Israeli government's decision and ordering Israel to repatriate Palestinians expelled from their homeland.

The United States joined the 14 other members of council in unanimously condemning the expulsion orders, calling them a violation of international law and asking Israel to halt all expulsions and allow those already expelled

to return.

Mr. Salah said that the U.S. support for the resolution constituted the strongest condemnation yet of the Israeli government's practices.

Mr. Salah also referred to a statement by the official spokesman of the U.S. State Department which described the resolution as serving as a clear message to the Israeli government that its policies do not serve the cause of peace or the ongoing peace process.

Indian official expresses satisfaction over trade balance with Jordan

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — India, the biggest importer of Jordanian phosphates and fertilizer-related products, has expressed satisfaction with the Kingdom's efforts to increase its purchase of Indian products and hopes that bilateral relations will continue to be improved, an Indian official said Wednesday.

The Indian government holds relations with Jordan in high regard and stands ready to help the Kingdom in all possible ways, said Indian Minister of State for Commerce P.C. Chidambaram during a brief transit through Amman on his way home after a visit to Turkey.

"Jordan is a small country and India cannot expect it to import as much as India does (from the Kingdom)," said Mr. Chidambaram in an interview with the Jordan Times at Amman Airport, where he was met by Minister of Industry and Trade Abdullah Ensour.

"We should appreciate a small country like Jordan trying to buy as much as it can from India," he added.

The Indian government, whose imports from Jordan are expected to be close to \$200 million in 1991-1992, is "very

satisfied" with the increase in Jordan's purchase of Indian products — expected to be around \$45 million during the same period — he said.

"We must appreciate the fact that India's trade with smaller countries will always be adverse to India while it will be (in its favour) while dealing with countries bigger than India," he said. "After all, Jordan's population is less than four million while India has 850 million people."

India's imports from Jordan mainly consist of rock phosphates, phosphoric acid, post-salt and related products. The Kingdom buys Indian wheat, frozen meat and fish, soya beans, sesame seeds and other traditional products as well as engineering items used in the mining industry.

In an informal meeting with Dr. Ensour, Minister of Supply Under-Secretary Radi Ibrahimi, Arab Potash Company Director-General Ali Ensour and senior officials from the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC), Mr. Chidambaram emphasised the importance that India attaches to its traditionally strong relations with Jordan and expressed hope that ties would continue to be strengthened.

"India values the relationship that His Majesty King Hussein had with (late Indian prime minister) Rajiv Gandhi," he told the gathering.

"We are keen to preserve it and maintain it."

"Trade is the best means to consolidate relations between countries," he said.

Dr. Ensour also paid tribute to Jordanian-Indian relations and particularly referred to the political support India extends to Arab causes.

"We cannot but remember the support that your country has always extended to our cause, particularly in times of crises," he told the visiting minister.

Dr. Ensour said Amman had always taken Indian representations on trade issues very seriously and the increase of Jordanian imports from an annual average of \$1 million five years ago to \$45 million in 1991-92 was an outstanding pointer to the Kingdom's efforts to achieve a better balance of trade with the subcontinent.

Both Dr. Ensour and Mr. Chidambaram entered to a joint venture worth \$120 million signed between the JPMC and an Indian private sector company to set up a phosphoric acid plant in the Kingdom

and said it was symbolic of the desire of both sides to enhance cooperation.

Formal registration of the joint company, with 60 per cent Indian equity participation, is expected to be completed before the end of this month. It will be the first Indo-Jordanian joint project.

In his interview with the Jordan Times, Mr. Chidambaram said India was better placed than most countries to extend technical help and expressed hope that Jordan would take advantage of Indian skills and expertise.

Mr. Chidambaram also referred to the new policy of the Indian government to throw open the country to foreign investment in almost every sector and Jordan, if finances were available to it, could also use the opportunities available in various fields.

Among the off-the-cuff projects he suggested was a Jordanian-owned meat plant in India to process the Kingdom's meat requirements.

Indian Ambassador to Jordan Gajendra Singh, senior embassy officials and the Indian trade representative in Jordan were on hand to receive and see off Mr. Chidambaram at the airport.

Jordan and Sudan: The perfect barter partners

By Maha Addasi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — On the occasion of the 36th anniversary of the independence of Sudan, an exhibition of Sudanese products was opened Wednesday at the International Fair Centre near the University of Jordan.

The exhibition introduces Sudanese goods to Jordanian importers. The goods include agricultural products as well as meat and leather materials.

According to the Sudanese Minister of Immigration Saeed Al Mahjoub, this exhibition comes as part of a protocol of \$70 million between Jordan and Sudan and aims to establish barter-type trade relations between the two countries.

"The protocol signed last October specifies the holding of an exhibition in Amman. In return, a similar exhibition of Jordanian products will be held in Khartoum within the coming six months," Mr. Al Mahjoub said, adding that this exhibition creates the ideal opportunity for the introduction of Sudanese products to importers in Jordan.

"Instead of buying the products using currency, this exhibition has a new idea behind it," Adel Al Odeh, the organiser of this exhibition said in reference to the bartering system. "Sudanese products are exchanged for Jordanian products and no exchange of money will take place. This is the first such trade arrangement in Jordan."

The qualities of the Sudanese products on display are of the highest standards and the prices are reasonable, said Ibrahim Mohamud Ali, a Sudanese trader who flew to Jordan especially for the exhibition.

According to Mr. Al Odeh, the prices are reasonable and quality is high so as to encourage Jordanians to buy products from Sudan over other countries.

The products displayed at the exhibition are mostly products that appeal to the trading sector in Jordan, he said.

In return for the products, Jordan will give industrial products, medicines and clothing among other products to Sudan, Mr. Al Mahjoub said.

The exhibition will continue until Jan. 15.

Officials discuss ways of increasing trade ties

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan and Sudan Wednesday opened talks aimed at promoting economic and trade ties, with both sides stressing the need for increasing the volume of goods exchanged between the two countries.

The Jordanian side to the talks was led by Minister of Industry and Trade Abdullah Ensour; the Sudanese side was led by Minister of State Othman Mahjoub.

According to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the talks also aim at exploring ways through which Sudan can benefit from Jordan's experiences in the economic fields.

The two ministers discussed prospects of Jordan buying Sudanese raw materials used in the Kingdom's industry as well as Sudanese fish, meat, cereals, and sugar. Jordan in exchange hopes to continue selling Sudan industrial products and will provide Sudan with expertise in the phosphate and cement processing industries.

Dr. Ensour and the Sudanese minister emphasised the need for setting up trade centres in Am-

man and Khartoum with the purpose of promoting the sales of their countries' products. They also said businessmen from the two countries should be invited to visit and discuss trade and the prospect of launching joint ventures.

Mr. Mahjoub is accompanied by a several-member delegation on his current visit to Jordan. Wednesday Mr. Mahjoub attended the opening of Sudan's first ever trade fair here which aims at promoting the sale of its products in Jordan.

The Sudanese minister later visited the Jordan Cement Factories Company in Fubeis and was briefed by the company's board Chairman Bassam Al Saket on the factory's production and marketing of cement.

Dr. Saket said that the company was willing to offer training and expertise to the Sudanese cadres.

The Sudanese minister, who was accompanied by his delegation, made a tour of the various parts of the factory.

Pilgrims arrive in Medina

AMMAN (J.T.) — Muslims from the occupied Arab territories began arriving at Medina, one of the two holy cities in Saudi Arabia on their way to Mecca, and the Ministry of Awaqaf and Islamic Affairs is arranging for their stay during their performance of religious rites.

The announcement was made by Dr. Ahmad Helayel, the ministry's secretary general, who led the pilgrims to the holy places. Arrangements have been made for the pilgrims stay in the two only cities in cooperation with the Saudi authorities. Dr. Helayel said in a statement upon returning to Amman from Medina.

The 1,118 pilgrims came from Palestinian lands occupied since 1948 and were given facilities by the ministry of Awaqaf and Islamic Affairs in south Shuneh in the Jordan Valley. They were, later put on buses taking them to the holy places in Saudi Arabia.

Dr. Helayel voiced Jordan's appreciation of the Saudi authorities' efforts to facilitate the pilgrims' stay. He had met with Saudi officials and discussed general affairs of pilgrims.

Normally, pilgrims perform pilgrimage just before the Eid Al Adha feast, but Muslims can perform what is called the lesser pilgrimage any day of the year.

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Jordan and perestroika

THE LAW on moneyexchangers passed by the Lower House of Parliament Wednesday is a welcome development. The old law governing the business of free trading and buying of money had shortcomings that were partly to blame for the fall of the dinar in 1988. The new law, although falling short of the expectations of a free market, restores a legal business that will generate the flow of funds and some financial and investment activity. This will in turn bolster economic activity by providing much needed funds. However, the free exchange of money should prompt the concerned authorities to free other elements in the economic process. Although it has been stressed by both the government and the parliament that total lifting of subsidies on basic foodstuffs would not be a healthy move when the country is suffering from massive unemployment and increased poverty, it nevertheless seems that certain economic policies must again be re-evaluated and, if necessary, scrapped or amended. The fixing of foodstuff, vegetables, fruits and other consumer commodities is contrary to the concept of a free market. Government-mandated pricing limits competition and innovation. It discourages investors and helps lower standards. But this is only a small part of the economic process. A great burden on the economy is embodied in the bureaucratic process that hinders the establishment of new enterprises and industries. A whole body of archaic laws and regulations still govern all aspects of economic life. Also, the government institutes that plan, regulate and execute the country's economic policies are stagnant, overstuffed and underqualified. A major restructuring programme, in addition to what is embodied in the 1992 budget, needs to be devised and implemented. That might require an all-encompassing economic conference in which all parties to the economic process would participate.

The Kingdom suffers from the lack of funds. But the important and lacking is proper management of the country's available funds and resources, especially human resources. It is unfortunate to see countries like Jordan and Australia attempting to recruit Jordanian workers and skilled labour and finding an abundance of applicants. It is an indication of the failure of our economic process. The money exchange law is only a step in the direction of fulfilling our ambitions and aspirations. It should be promptly followed by an effort to reform our economic policies and free the potential of our people.

TRADING PRESS COMMENTARIES

The daily welcomed a resolution by the U.N. Security Council condemning Israel's decision to expel the 12 Arab citizens from their Palestinian homeland and said the resolution reflected the conscience of the world community. But the paper said something such a resolution is something and implementing it is something else. The council resolution was preceded by numerous resolutions condemning Israel's deportation of other citizens and committing other atrocities, but no resolution was implemented although they all demanded that Israel comply with the council's order of repatriating the expelled citizens, the paper said. The paper said that the Security Council's resolutions should be binding, and Israel should comply, otherwise these resolutions are meaningless. When the United States and its European allies vetoed a council resolution to be implemented, they resort to all the means and the use of force if necessary in order to prevent it, as it happened in the Gulf crisis and the occupation of Kuwait, the paper continued. It said that Israel has been vetoed by the United States, the Europeans and the world community to disregard all council resolutions passed since 1948 and has been allowed to pursue its settlement programme in the occupied Arab lands and consolidate its occupation of Arab territories. Unless the condemnation is followed by actions to force Israel to respect the council resolution, and unless the Arab citizens in Palestine are restored with an end to occupation, said the paper, one can be convinced that the Security Council has any power and its resolutions would mean nothing.

The daily Dustour daily Wednesday tackled the prospect of a strike staged by electricity workers if their demands for a 10 per cent wage increase remain unmet. Talaat Shana'a said that the Jordan Electric Power Company (JEPCO) is to blame if the power supply fails to reach homes by Saturday if the strike goes ahead as he said simply because it is concerned about the supply of electricity under a concession granted to it by the government, the paper said. JEPCO should also respond favourably to the workers' demand for a better pay because it is unreasonable to see a skilled worker living with his family on a salary of less than 100 Jordanian dinars a month, the writer added. Jordanian citizens should not be facing problems of power cuts because of a dispute between JEPCO management and the workers, the writer said. He said that the workers' demand for a better pay is justified under the present difficult circumstances they face, and the Jordanian public's demand for continued supply of essential means for their daily life is also justified as the public has never shirked the responsibility of paying its dues to the company.

Bush making mid-course corrections as polls show his campaign faltering

By Tom Raum
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President George Bush enters the 1992 campaign year in a position that six months ago would hardly have seemed conceivable: Running hard with approval ratings whittled by the recession to below 50 per cent.

Suddenly, the presidential election that had looked like a cakewalk for Mr. Bush has the potential of becoming a horse race. "President Bush and the economy are both beginning the new year down under," said Democratic National Chairman Ron Brown.

As Mr. Bush conducts a 12-day trip to Australia and Asia billed as a trade mission and job hunt, Republican and White House strategists are seeking ways to regain political momentum.

Much has transpired in the world since Mr. Bush in 1988 told audiences "read my lips — no new taxes," asserted that the cold war still raged and called for maintaining the defence build-up of the Reagan years.

But his re-election prospects may boil down to three words that he's been putting into almost all his speeches: "Jobs, jobs, jobs."

While his advisers are still divided over just how to proceed on the economy in the coming weeks, there is general agreement that the absence of a recovery by spring could spell serious political troubles for Mr. Bush. Last year was a roller coaster

for the president, who is expected to formally announce his candidacy for a second term early in February.

The year began with lingering Republican unease over the president's 1990 flip-flop on new taxes and open Democratic scepticism towards Mr. Bush's Gulf policies.

Then, with the swift and successful victory in the Gulf war, Mr. Bush's ratings soared. Even his political enemies were envious.

For a while last spring and well into the summer, it seemed he could do no wrong.

But the recovery faltered — despite administration claims up to a few weeks ago that the recession was over — Mr. Bush's standing in the polls crashed to the lowest point in his presidency.

What had been widely viewed as Mr. Bush's strong suit — foreign policy — became a potential liability as polls suggested Americans felt Mr. Bush was spending too much time on foreign affairs and not enough on domestic matters.

With the demise of the Soviet Union and the end of the cold war, Mr. Bush was forced by domestic political pressures to step out of the international policy limelight. He began acting like a candidate who could hear the footsteps behind him.

Mr. Bush began engaging in a series of scripted encounters with "real people," taking highway construction workers to lunch near Dallas, mingling with workers at a dinner in Chicago, and even dropping in for a beer at a

Texas dance hall.

Mr. Bush, long an advocate of open-trade, has gone so far as to take a team of businessmen with him to Asia, including strong protectionists such as Chrysler Chairman Lee Iacocca.

"There's some slings and arrows out there. But don't feel sorry for the Bushes, we love it," the president said as he summed up his year and his political predicament at a holiday barbecue in Beville, Texas.

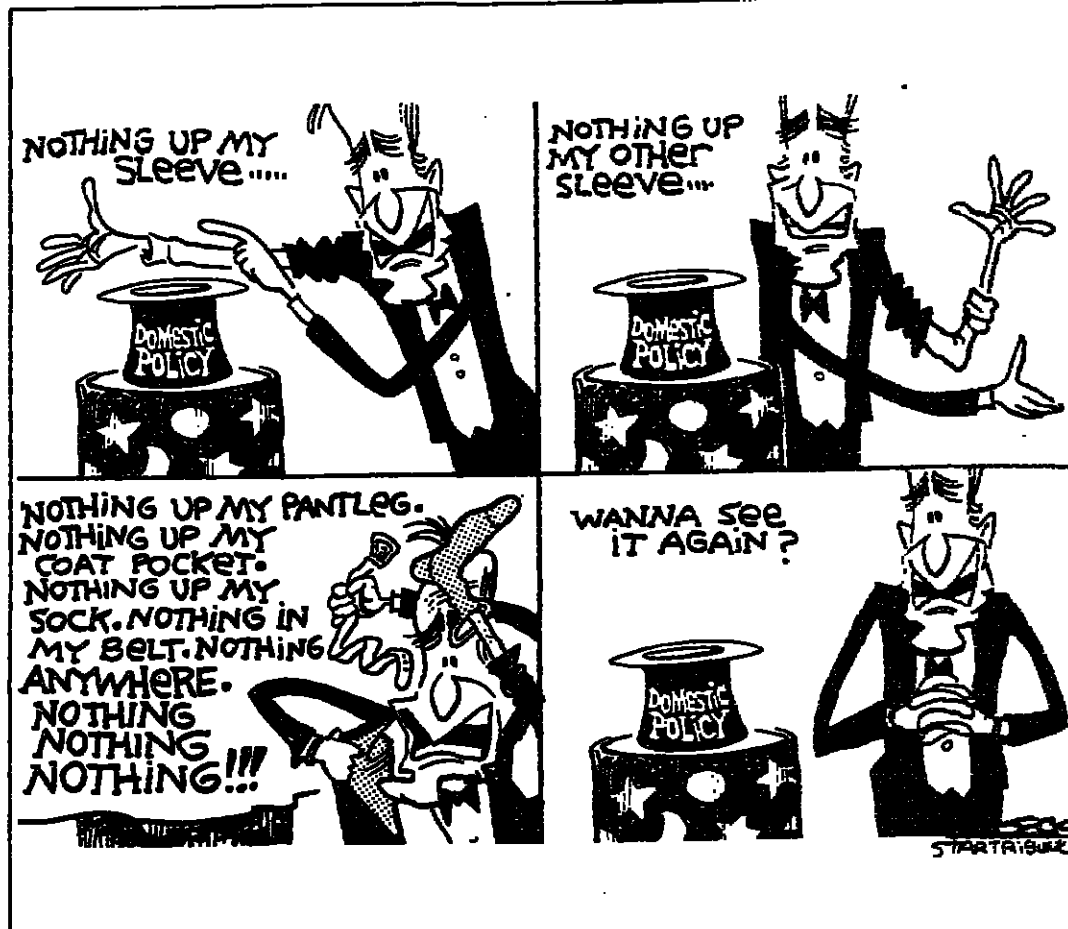
"I'm working hard," he said. "I'm doing my level best. I'm absolutely confident that this country's going to turn around and this economy will be back on track. And I am absolutely confident that you, the American people, want me to continue to lead."

The president's campaign aides are concerned that a strong showing by conservative columnist and TV commentator Patrick Buchanan in recession-weary New Hampshire could deal Mr. Bush an early humiliation and throw him off stride.

"History tells you that a bad economy means the president will have a close race," said Charles Black, a senior Bush campaign adviser.

"His trouble is largely the trouble with the economy," said Stephen Hess, an analyst at the Brookings Institution. "All these other blips become irrelevant if the economy goes up. If they don't, then it's a whole new ball game."

So, Mr. Bush is making mid-course corrections — putting



together new campaign and policy teams and refocusing his message to domestic concerns in an effort to prove to voters he's on the job. His new chief of staff, Samuel Skinner, is beginning to put his

stamp on the job that until last month had belonged to the volatile — and widely disliked — John Sununu. And, for all his troubles with Congress, Mr. Bush wrapped up 1991 with some hard-won con-

gressional successes, including the Senate confirmation of Clarence Thomas for the Supreme Court and Robert Gates as CIA director. He extended his shutout on veto overrides to 25.

Israel should improve Palestinians' living conditions

By Ephraim Sneh

TEL AVIV — Even at this early stage, Israel can make two unilateral gestures that could dramatically improve the atmosphere in the territories. The first would be approval of family reunification requests already under consideration by the civil administration. (Anyone involved in terrorist activity, of course, would be excluded.) The several thousand applications at issue would not change the demographic situation, especially with many applicants already in the territories.

This humanitarian alleviation of one of the Palestinians' more painful problems would be well received in the territories and appreciated by the world community as well.

The second gesture would be to permit political activity that is not inimical to the peace process, so long as it does not encourage violence. While some Palestinians may see this as legitimising the status quo, it would allow the Palestinians to adopt a political, nonviolent approach to national activity. This would send a very positive message.

Israel could also turn over several administrative functions to the Palestinians with minimal delay. The Palestinian negotiating delegation might serve as an interim self-government council until elections could be held in the territories. The self-governing council can be responsible for:

The health system

This is mainly government hospitals already administered by

Palestinian doctors. Recently, steps have been taken to expand the local administration of this system. The Israeli civil administration would have to continue to provide funding until the self-governing council establishes a tax system.

The education system

This is also largely locally administered. For an interim period, a joint Palestinian-Israeli committee would be necessary to oversee approval of textbooks in order to weed out material that could incite hatred or sedition.

The justice system

This has jurisdiction over all civil and criminal cases that are not security-related, and in the West Bank it operates in accordance with Jordanian law. While many complex legal matters would require protracted negotiations, there is really no impediment to immediate transfer of the civil court system to the self-governing authority.

Issues linked to the difficult subjects of land and water cannot be dealt with in the preliminary stages of negotiations. Nevertheless, some steps could be taken soon.

The present West Bank road plan, "Plan No. 30," was formulated under the government of former Prime Minister Menachem Begin. Anticipating eventual annexation of the West Bank to Israel, it ignores the needs of the Palestinian population. Only partially implemented, its very existence as a master plan is the source of many West Bank restrictions and tensions. A joint

Palestinian-Israeli team could be impaneled to develop a replacement plan reflecting the needs of both sides.

Pollution from Nablus is fouling the subterranean aquifers of the coastal plain. The United Nations Development Programme had proposed to fund a water purification plan, but the idea was shelved when the intifada broke out. The project, if revived, would provide employment and solve an ecological problem threatening Israelis and Palestinians alike.

When Ariel Sharon was minister of defence, he transferred authority over West Bank water from his office (which rules the West Bank through the civil administration) to the government-controlled water company, Mekorot. This annexed the West Bank's water to Israel without annexing the land, in order to exclude the topic of water from any future negotiations over autonomy. The water problem is extremely difficult and will likely be deferred to later negotiations, but responsibility for other agricultural — and infrastructure — related issues can be transferred to the self-governing council immediately.

A joint Palestinian-Israeli commission for economic cooperation could coordinate agricultural exports, reduce competition in domestic and export markets and enhance West Bank farmers' export potential. Jordan, a primary market for West Bank agricultural produce, could also be represented on this commission, providing practical justification for the existence of a joint Palesti-

nian-Jordanian delegation to the current negotiations on an interim settlement.

The telecommunications system in the territories is inadequate. The self-governing council could be allowed to solicit international bids to set up a modern system. Naturally, Israeli companies should be allowed to compete in this and other such tenders.

It is doubtful that the current Israeli government, given its composition and its declared policies, is capable of making such changes in the territories. The provocative settlement in Silwan, approved and financed by Yitzhak Shamir's government, demonstrates its opposition.

Great difficulties are evident in the gap between the negotiating expectations of the Shamir government and the Palestinians. While Mr. Shamir favours limited autonomy as the end of the process, the Palestinians consider self-government a transitional stage on the way to independence. However, the measures described above can be easily implemented almost instantly if Israel sincerely intends to give the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip self-government as part of an interim agreement.

The writer, a retired Israeli general, directed civil administration in the West Bank from 1985 to 1987 and now heads the Golda Meir Association, which teaches democratic values to Israeli high school. The article is reprinted from the Washington Post.

LETTERS

What about U.N. resolutions on Palestine?

To the Editor:

I met a cousin of mine I had not seen for years last week. "How are you?" I asked. "And what are you doing now?" "Still 'studying' at Bir Zeit University," she said. She enrolled there six years ago and she is still in her sophomore year!! Monday (Jan. 6) was the Solidarity Day with Bir Zeit University in protest of its closure for the last four years by the Israeli military authorities. This brings to mind the forceful American lobbying and arm-twisting to cancel the U.N. resolution equating Zionism with racism. (We already "forgot" the Gulf war and the Iraqi children dying as a result of the embargo which I thought was imposed to get Iraq out of Kuwait!!)

I am not going to argue with the American policy on this issue. I just wonder how forceful the American administration is going to be in "talking" Israel into opening Palestinian universities, stopping deportations, freezing settlements, "humanising" their occupation, and freeing the tens of thousands of detainees, especially those detained without charges or trial for a number of months. The U.S. \$10 billion loan guarantee "decision" will tell.

The U.S. was ready to impose sanctions against Libya (or even use force) for not turning over to the West two of its nationals suspected of bombing an airplane. (The Libyan action not to turn them over is not even a violation of law since there is no extradition treaty between Libya and the Western countries.)

The Israeli closure of universities, mass punishment and curfews, deportations, bulldozing houses, building settlements and detaining youngsters without trial in the Palestinian occupied territories is a loud cry against all conventions and international law, let alone Security Council resolutions that we have lost count of.

I do not expect the U.S. administration to impose sanctions or go to war with Israel. I just ask every American to think about these matters when he or she goes to church on Sundays and when filing in his or her income tax returns for this year.

Nabil Issa,
P.O. Box 922783,
Gardens Street,
Amman, Jordan

Thank you, everyone!

To the Editor:

AS perhaps the only "local" stranded in Petra for four days along with all the foreign tourists, may I please thank on their behalf the Ministry of Tourism, the Armed Forces and all those who helped airlift us all out of Petra. In the snow, not forgetting several sick and injured local people from the village of Wadi Mousa. Ministry of Tourism is Secretary General Nasri Atallah flew down on January 5 and personally organised and supervised the whole operation, staying overnight to see the last four "shuttles" off — by no means an easy job.

Many thanks must also go to everyone who helped us in Wadi Mousa and tried their best to keep us comfortable (and sane!) under extremely difficult conditions. The main hub of activity was in the Forum Hotel where the management and receptionists worked from early morning until late at night to make many outside contacts for the tourists and waiters did extra long shifts when their counterparts could not reach the hotel. Everyone of them was tolerant and patient during these frustrating times. The other hotels were all fully occupied, although all operated without electricity and some without water when pipes froze solid. Our tea had to be made from snow, and cooking was done by candlelight in the kitchens! Quite a story for tourists to tell back home! Thank-you everyone once again.

Chris Larter,
P.O. Box 140508,
Amman, Jordan.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

هنا من الامارات

Star's mysterious death tempts movie-maker

By Katia Sabet

DAMASCUS — In the 1940s, Asmahan, the sister of legendary singer Farid Al Atrache was Egypt's rising star. As a singer and prominent member of high society, she was constantly in the limelight. Tragedy ended her career abruptly when she was only 32; her car crashed and plunged into Mansouria Canal at the foot of the Pyramids in 1946. Asmahan knew she would die young. One day a fortune teller had said to her: "You will die in water."

Was it really an accident, or was it murder? The fact that the driver of the car was never found, dead or alive, leads weight to the second theory. But who would have wanted to kill the glamorous singer? A rival, a spurned lover, the British Intelligence Service?

Since no-one has come up with a satisfactory answer, the case leaves plenty of

room for interpretation. Syrian movie director Omar Amiralai says he will try to lift the veil of secrecy that still hangs over Asmahan's death. His new film project will focus on the unresolved mystery. While he specialises in the production of documentaries — some of them run by the French Antenne 2 television channel — Amiralai has earned a reputation for bringing controversial subjects to the fore, and he has been acclaimed as one of the Middle East's most promising directors. His film project will be based on a book about the singer by journalist Mohammad Al Tabei.

"I was fascinated by the book," Amiralai explained in an exclusive interview in Damascus. "It has a very specific approach... There is a strong feeling of failure and disappointment. Tabei was madly in love with Asmahan. He is a brilliant journalist and at the time, he was very

closely linked to all the social circles and major events. Asmahan only saw him as a friend and you can feel that in the book." There was plenty of romance in Asmahan's life, almost too much for real life: The descendant of a Druze prince, she stands as the symbol of a world now lost. After a turbulent childhood she married a cousin who had been sent to Egypt to murder her mother. They fell in love, married and went to live in the Lebanese mountains where they lived in seclusion for six years. Asmahan returned to Cairo alone and pregnant, and soon became a star in the firmament of Cairo's high society. Her shadow, if unproven links to the British Intelligence Service spice up an already fascinating tale.

Amiralai has his own interpretation of the story: "I don't want to simply tell the story of Asmahan's life," he said. "Besides, I'm always a

little weary of popular myths, they always build people up. Asmahan could simply have been a woman with a beautiful voice and fascinating eyes. But Tabei's book made me want to look deeper into this character whom I did not know at all. I read the official biography produced by her family. It is full of stereotypes: Her brother who is 85 and lives in Cairo still threatens with court action anyone who would dare sully his sister's name."

"I studied the period and read the memoirs of former British officers and others who were living in Cairo at the time and yet Asmahan's life remains a puzzle, there are great chunks of it that are blank."

Her childhood was typical. She attended a school run by nuns until the age of 16. Her mother, on the other hand, was an intriguing character. She had been one of the wealthiest and most beautiful women in Beirut. She stunned Lebanese high society by becoming the first woman to drive a car and wear short skirts. Suddenly, and for reasons that remain unclear, she left her husband and took off to Cairo with her three children. She began singing in the Egyptian capital's cabarets to earn a living. Her social rank and grand airs attracted the cream of society and it was in this context that young Asmahan's voice was discovered.

Amiralai's film won't close the case, but he is confident that he will enlarge the debate by adding a new dimension. And he is already talking about other plans. He is preparing a dramatisation of the history of a unique 10th-century community known as the Karmate who lived in what is now the Syrian-Turkish border region. The film was to be a Syrian-Soviet-German co-production, but political upheavals in the Soviet Union may curtail

funding.

At 47, Amiralai is no stranger to unusual themes. Since the beginning of his career he has always gone for out-of-the-way and provocative ideas. He managed to get some of his work banned in Syria and later in Egypt. This "enfant terrible" of the cinema started quietly as an art student in the Damascus Beaux Arts School. He earned a scholarship and left for Paris where he spent two years studying theatre and film. There he experienced the 1968 student uprising. Soon afterwards he returned to Syria where he directed his first short film. It won the second prize — the Silver Dove — at the Leipzig Film Festival.

Encouraged by this success, Amiralai embarked on a more ambitious project — a 90-minute documentary for the Syrian National Cinema Institute. The end result was a resounding and damning document on the failure of agrarian reform. Explains Amiralai: "By the early 1970s, I had spent enough time among country folk and peasants to realise the failure of the agrarian reform and the establishment of a new form of state feudalism. Based on Socialist ideas and unions, the system had given rise to a whole new class of opportunists. The film did not go down too well." Syria immediately banned it, but he managed to get a copy out to Europe. In 1974 it won the jury's prize at the Toulon Festival in France, and later the critic's prize at the Berlin Festival. Back home in Syria, it remained prohibited. "At one point the film had become a sort of fetish, a myth, because everyone was talking about it and no-one had seen it!" Amiralai exclaims with a laugh.

This did not stop him from being put in charge of the Damascus Film Forum, a responsibility he took on with

enthusiasm. "The forum had a strong tradition. It was set up in 1952 and with a few other friends who were directors, we took over. We didn't have the money to make our own films so we concentrated on showing what we thought were the best movies of the time." Foreign embassies provided film copies, and business was soon booming. Meanwhile Amiralai was also working on his own projects: In 1977 he shot a documentary for Syrian television showing how an ancient village was transformed by the arrival of modern technology. Explains the film-maker: "The village, called Saddad, was inhabited by a Christian community that was well-known for its ancient skills and crafts. All of a sudden, they decided to convert to a market economy by raising chickens. My film is about this ancient village that was transformed into a massive chicken coop, in the process losing its traditions that were thousands of years old, its soul, its identity, ethics and finally its wealth because an epidemic wiped out the chickens."

The film was bought and distributed abroad, in particular in France where a producer in charge of documentaries at Antenne 2 asked Amiralai to join the team. Amiralai has directed a dozen 60-minute television productions. Known as "creative documentaries," the programmes take about a year to prepare. "I have made documentaries on Beirut, the situation in Lebanon before the Israeli invasion, a film about the Palestinians during the siege of Beirut, a portrait of (former Pakistani Prime Minister) Benazir Bhutto and finally a film about women in Egypt — for which I was barred from the country for years," recalls Amiralai.

Entitled Sarcophagus of Love, the film portrays several

Asmahan

al women: A maid who is exploited and beaten by her husband; a woman lawyer who has sexual problems; a young woman who would like to regain her lost virginity; and a famous actress. Amiralai defends himself against criticism that the portraits he did are not representative of what's happening in everyday life. "That's rubbish!" he protests. "I chose those women because they represented precisely the sort of problem I thought needed to be highlighted. Besides, this film was part of a series that spoke about women and man-woman relationships. The same work was done on women in Japan, the Soviet Union, Cuba and India. Each film produced shocking revelations."

"We have to show examples that illustrate the problems we want to raise. If we showed normal people, nobody would be interested. The object of my film was not to present a panorama on women in general but to focus on a few difficult cases," Amiralai says. "Apart from the actress, each of these women represent a facet of a very real problem

for many. The film, for example, spoke of her problems with enormous clarity and in a way that is unique in our society — a poor woman who would like to be a maid and finally realise to what extent to which she is exploited by her husband, also a strong case for social conscience. And took the other young woman, a lot of courage to describe how she is forced by society to lie and cheat."

Nevertheless, the film is unanimously criticised in Egypt for its negative message. "I am not here to indulge in mystification," says Amiralai. "I did not go to Syria and I don't go to Egypt, Kuwait or anywhere else for that matter. All I know is that the Arab world is in poor state and we should find out why. I am not prepared to change my attitude by an inch. I was criticised 'pandering' to the foreigner I work for. The truth is the Arabs have a false idea of themselves, or rather, they know their shortcomings but hate for anyone to speak about them. I don't go along with this." — World Net Link.



Having built a reputation as a film-maker who relishes controversy, Omar Amiralai is about to tackle the mystery surrounding the life and death of Asmahan.

Alexandria's mansions crumble under Egyptian rent controls

By John West
Reuters

ALEXANDRIA, Egypt — The old buildings of Alexandria, relics of splendour in the ancient Mediterranean city, are decaying — neglected and unwanted by their owners.

Once the pride of the Egyptian port city, these picturesque houses and apartment blocks are being threatened by rent control laws passed in the 1960s.

Landlords receiving rents as low as ten Egyptian pounds (\$3) a month for a big

apartment in the centre of Egypt's main trading city tend not to care about their property. Some don't even mind if it gets knocked about — the sooner the buildings collapse, the sooner the owners can clear the ground and make some money from the land.

Bolder speculators simply ignore legal proceedings and demolish their properties regardless.

Buildings still standing are left to crumble.

"These buildings are the last remnant of the cosmopolitan city," said Mohammad

Awad, a leading architect who has founded the Alexandria Historic Preservation Resource Centre to save them.

"Doctors and lawyers who make over 1,000 pounds (\$330) a day are renting offices in Italian turn-of-the-century apartment blocks and don't spend a penny more than their token rents to maintain the buildings," he said.

Before Egypt's 1952 revolution that overthrew the monarchy, Turks, Greeks, Jews, Armenians, Italians, Lebanese and other minor-

ities lived side by side with the Egyptians, creating a heady mix of Eastern and Western culture.

Each community left its mark. Clusters of low Ottoman Turkish houses survive by the port while Baroque office buildings, luxurious Rococo villas and even functional Bauhaus-style apartment blocks are dotted around the rest of the city.

But Alexandria has become a bustling third world city of some three million people, suffering Third World problems of over-

population, slum housing and scant resources.

Peasants flood into the city from the Nile Delta in their thousands and often end up living on rooftops.

Mr. Awad says liberating rents would solve the city's housing shortage as well as safeguard its past glories.

"There's no real housing shortage. We have thousands of apartments empty. We're not asking for money, just a proper policy with liberated rents and tax exemptions."

Planning: Department chief Mohsen Zahran, responsible for the Alexandria

2005 Project which aims to restructure the city over the next two decades, says plans are afoot to save the buildings.

"We have made a survey of buildings which have historical and artistic significance, at least 100 of them."

He added that a new law being considered by parliament would let landlords of older buildings increase their rents but would not abolish controls — a sensitive political issue in Egypt.

Another possible step was to tax developers putting up luxury apartment blocks.

Mr. Awad's Preservation Resource Centre, which hopes to open a museum dedicated to the city within the next few months, has prepared its own list of over 500 buildings worth preserving.

"The official list is sketchy, short and ill-conceived," Mr. Awad said. But he added that authorities were showing more interest now than a few years ago.

The grimy, peeling facades of Italian-designed apartment blocks often belie richly furnished interiors. Dank stair-

ways with broken light fittings and rising damp can lead to modern offices with parquet floors or tiled carpets.

"These buildings are unique, the legacy of a cosmopolitan society," Mr. Awad said, comparing them favourably with modernist high-rise developments built during Egypt's revolutionary or socialist era in the 1950s or 1960s.

"We are a developing society but we also need aesthetics — You cannot live without aesthetics," he declared.

French defend Camembert from the Eurocrats

By Andrew Gumbel
Reuters

CAMEMBERT, France — To hear the French tell it, catastrophe is about to strike one of their cherished national institutions — Camembert cheese. Ever-watchful officials of the European Community (EC) are concerned that the creamy soft cheese, traditionally made from unpasteurised milk, could spread dangerous bacteria if not properly controlled.

The very suggestion that France's best-known cheese, this year celebrating its 200th anniversary, might be a health hazard has the French fuming with indignation.

"We who have loved these cheeses since childhood are not going to stand by and watch them eradicated from our lives by European technocrats who know nothing about good food," said a

petition recently circulated among cheesemakers.

Rumour even had it at one stage that the EC, worried by recent scares over listeria poisoning, intended to ban all cheeses made with unpasteurised milk.

Not so, says Brussels. The European Commission swears it has no evil designs on Camembert.

But the dairy farmers whose livelihoods depend on making traditional Camembert still fear that health legislation could hit sales and even halt some production.

"One suggestion was to stamp boxes with a health warning. It's as though we were making cigarettes, not cheese," complained Francois Michel, head of the Camembert Makers' Association.

Mr. Michel blames the fuss on "northern countries," meaning Britain, Denmark and the Netherlands, who he said would rather eat insipid factory-produced Camembert than take a risk on the real thing.

In fact, he argued, the risk is minimal. Only top quality Camembert is made from unpasteurised milk and nobody in his knowledge has ever fallen ill from eating it.

"Mr. Michel's association, together with the French Agriculture Ministry, recognises only nine cheesemakers

— all working in the rolling countryside of Normandy — as producers of the best authentic Camembert."

Their cheeses, governed by regulations as complex as any dreamed up by the EC, bear the "appellation controlled" seal of quality reserved for France's choicest food and wines.

Most Camembert is not made in Normandy but processed in anonymous factories with pasteurised milk. Chalky, bland cheese bearing the Camembert name is made all over France, as well as in locations as far-flung as South America.

Makers of the real thing, such as Jean-Pierre Lefevre of the Moulin de Carcel Cheese Factory in St Pierre-Sur Dives, have no time for such imitations. He and his 22 employees lovingly turn out Camemberts by hand using a nine-stage method which lasts three weeks.

The milk is heated to no more than 37 degrees Celsius

(98.6 degrees Fahrenheit) and curdled with rennet. The temperature of the dank rooms where the Camembert matures if kept under strict control and cheeses are regularly checked for size, consistency and quality.

The cheeses are highly sensitive and hygiene is essential. Once, Mr. Lefevre recounted, his father repainted some storage room walls and the Camemberts kept there immediately went rotten.

Is the livelihood of men like Mr. Lefevre, a fourth generation Camembert maker, really under threat?

Precedent suggests the EC is not the ogre it is sometimes depicted to be. Germany has succeeded in stopping foreign brewers from faking its celebrated beers, and Italy has stopped soggy pasta made from substandard grain from posing as the real thing.

Camembert can claim to have luck on its side.

It was created through a chance encounter between Marie Harel, a milkmaid in the tiny Normandy village which gives the cheese its name, and a priest fleeing the terror at the height of the French Revolution 200 years ago.

The priest taught her the crucial secret of how to grow the white bacterial crust.

A great cheese was born, but it took another stroke of luck — a chance visit to the area by Emperor Napoleon III in 1861 — to bring Camembert to national attention.

Napoleon liked Camembert so much that he invited Harel's grandson, Victor Paynel, to Paris as a purveyor of cheeses to the imperial household.

The wooden box which proved the key to Camembert's marketing success arrived in 1890. During World War I, Camembert was the staple ration of French soldiers at the front.

Mitterrand sees culture clash in EC cheese plans

PARIS (R) — French President Francois Mitterrand has said that European Commission plans to impose strict hygiene rules on foods such as cheese typified the north-south culture clash in the Community.

"I believe there is a certain moralism in the north which tries to impose rules on the good life of the south," Mitterrand told French employers and trade unionists. "The examples are notorious — like when they determine that a dry cheese made in Holland is highly superior to a good Norman cheese which is a bit runny ... I like runny."

"But what I don't like, and that's my nature, is to be forbidden to pick the one I like," he added.

Brussels-based European officials are worried that French Camembert cheese from Normandy, traditionally made from unpasteurised milk, could spread dangerous bacteria if not properly monitored.

Most remarkable was Camembert's rise to international fame.

In 1926 Joe Knirim, an eccentric New York doctor suffering from chronic stomach pains arrived in Camembert to pay tribute to Marie Harel for inventing the only food he could bear to eat.

Back in the United States, Mr. Knirim raised money for

a monument to Harel and stoked enormous interest in the French wonder cheese that sustained him.

A thriving export trade began, as did the imitation. Within 25 years the Borden Dairy Company of Ohio then the largest cheese producer in the United States was producing one million Camemberts of its own every day.

The abominable snowstorm

By Maha Addasi

The only advantage to the snowstorm that welcomed the New Year with us is that it provided the country with substantial amounts of much needed water supplies. Other than that, all the other aspects of this "great snow" is that it is not great at all.

I was 13 when I first saw snow and it was hate at first sight. I used to read fairy tales about snow. As in "Snow White, who had a beautiful complexion as pure as snow," or "they built a snowman and had a lot of fun."

But then the truth came out. I actually saw snow, caught a cold and each time I set a foot out of the door I shivered like a leaf beneath my eight hundred layers of sweaters and coats. I realised then that snow is only good when you read about it while sitting in a warm atmosphere, preferably by the pool in the middle of a scorching summer, and only then.

This snow seems to attract many, though. The road is swarming with children who had never seen snow before. I'm told. And their unfortunate parents have to learn how to drive on the slippery roads the hard way.

Mechanics in garages will work well this season. I already have a whole list of friends who need work done on their cars. That is why I have not yet driven my car this year. I suspect it will not budge when I turn it on though.

As for being caught at home so far this year, it is not too bad when you realise that some people had no electricity or heating or telephones in this "big snow."

I have to admit that although I hate many things about



snow, like slipping and falling. I did go out to take photographs of the scenery. But I will not know how the pictures will turn out until the middle of the summer.

Paul Simon tour signals end of South Africa's isolation

By Rich Mkhondo
Reuters

JOHANNESBURG — When Paul Simon steps on stage in Johannesburg, he will end South Africa's years of cultural isolation when sounds of silence echoed around the country.

Simon will be the first top light artist to visit South Africa since political reform began two years ago, and local promoters and anti-apartheid activists say it will signal to the world that it is now acceptable to play in the public.

"We have planned for months to play in front of 50,000 people in South Africa," said promoter Attie Van Wyk.

Simon is well known in South Africa for his top-selling Graceland album, which grew heavily on local urban black music known as Mbaqanga.

The album propelled several South African groups and musicians to international prominence, including the 3-member Zulu vocal group Ladysmith Black Mambazo. The group, perhaps best known for the track Homeless on Graceland, has since added a number of foreign

tours and will be singing with Simon during his concerts in South Africa.

"I am very pleased Paul is coming as he is very important to my group. He opened the gates for African music abroad," said Mambazo leader Joseph Shabalala.

Van Wyk said the two-week tour would pave the way for other major acts in the near future, possibly including Phil Collins and Dire Straits.

The easing of the cultural boycott against South Africa follows President F.W. de Klerk's scrapping of apartheid legislation. Last month he opened constitutional talks with black leaders.

In recognition of his reforms, Commonwealth countries and other governments have begun lifting punitive sanctions against South Africa.

Despite approval for Simon's tour from the main black opposition group, the African National Congress (ANC) of Nelson Mandela, some small radical organisations have demanded it be cancelled.

The leftist Azanian Youth Organisation said the tour was premature and would provoke hostility.

However, the South Africa

Musicians' Alliance said it was satisfied Simon had fully complied with criteria designed to redress racial inequality in cultural facilities.

Musicians touring with him will give workshops in black townships and he has donated 2,000 concert tickets to underprivileged children.

South African acts like Stimela and Afro-Cool Concept will play on the same bill.

In a recent satellite link-up with South African journalists, Simon said he was excited at the relaxation of cultural sanctions and believed other international artists would follow.

"There's a great interest in performing in South Africa. Many artists will be looking at the concerts we do," Simon said.

He said Bob Dylan and other artists had asked about the possibilities of performing in South Africa.

Dylan was one of the foreign musicians who sang on Ain't Gonna Play Sun City, an anti-apartheid song of the 1980s referring to attempts by South African promoters to attract international acts to nominally independent homeland of Bophuthatswana.

Only Pretoria recognises

the independence of Bophuthatswana, site of the Sun City gambling resort and golf course.

Sadao Watanabe, Japan's premier jazz saxophonist, will play four concerts in Johannesburg this month.

The popular American rap group, Public Enemy, is set to tour South Africa in April. Britain's Musician's Union is due to decide next month whether to lift its cultural boycott.

"Everyone is aware of the changes happening in South Africa and we are now getting more calls from television companies requesting to sell programmes featuring our members," said union official Stan Martin.

"It is getting more and more to the point where a decision will have to be taken."

International theatre will also return to South Africa this month with the opening of the musical Les Misérables.

An organiser of Austria's annual Salzburg Summer Academy for Fine Arts, Richard Berghens, has said academy musicians and artists might visit South Africa this year after the Salzburg Festival.

No jacket but map required at Li Li's Peking restaurant

By Andrew Browne
Reuters

BEIJING — Down a dingy 'ey in Peking is one of the world's most exclusive restaurants — Li Li's, where couples dating from China's perial palace are cooked on two gas burners. Book early. There is only one table.

No amount of argument will persuade the 70-year-old proprietor, Li Shanlin, to toggle the three-month wait-list — not even if your name is James Baker, the S. Secretary of State who is in Peking last month. Mr. Baker was turned down when his aides called to make a last-minute dinner reservation.

"I said 'no, we're booked it night,'" the patrician Li answered, firmly but lightly.

Li Li's takes parties of eight to 10 people to sample the dishes served to the Dowager Empress Cixi, a dragon-lady who was the power behind the Chinese throne for almost 40 years between 1861 and 1908.

Getting there is a nightmare.

Too famous to need advertising but too hidden to do without, Li Li's is notoriously hard to find in a maze of alleys to the north of Old Peking, the heart of the city. Located on Yang Fang Alley, it is marked simply "Number 11." The address is shared by 13 families who occupy what was once an elegant courtyard residence.

World statesmen and ambassadors, politicians and international financiers — the smart ones who booked ahead — have all ducked into the darkened doorway of the compound and found their way into the Li family home by edging along a narrow concrete path.

The food, celebrated throughout China, is served in the only empty room of the house, the spare bedroom.

Mr. Li cooks from recipes handed down from his grandfather, a Manchurian general whose job was to protect the palace kitchens from assassins who might poison the empress's food.

And he does it all on two

gas burners in an outside kitchen the size of a broom cupboard.

"Eating and drinking are my hobbies," said Mr. Li, who grew up next door to the sprawling palace complex in a household boasting more than 30 servants including six cooks. The kitchen was out of bounds to the children.

"I was a filial son. But I sneaked into the kitchen to watch the cooks at work," said Mr. Li. "I never had to sweat over cooking. It all came naturally."

The restaurant was opened in 1985 by Li's eldest daughter, Li Li, and it became so successful that she left China to open a branch in Australia. Her father taught her cooking and he keeps the books. He lectured in applied mathematics at a Peking Technical College for more than 40 years.

The culinary secrets of China's imperial palace are safe with the Li family.

Mr. Li talks of writing a cook book but without much conviction. The recipes of his grandfather, the imperial minister of household affairs,

are all in his head. They are not the dishes served at state occasions but the "family-style" dinners enjoyed privately at the palace.

The dowager empress was a picky eater. Chefs from all over China paraded upwards of 100 dishes to her at dinner. Sometimes she took a mouthful but more often than not she waved them away, pausing to admire the presentation.

Mr. Li introduces each dish in impeccable English as it arrives at the table and is placed on a battered Lazy Susan. Guests sit on folding garden chairs.

Starters include sugared walnuts, steamed chicken in aspic, shredded jellyfish and pickled cucumber with chilies.

Prices per head start at 80 yuan (\$15) going up to 200 yuan (\$37). The main difference is shark's fin soup and abalone at the top of the scale.

Mr. Li supplies local Peking beer and Great Wall wine — both mediocre. Guests usually bring their own drinks.

For reservations, call 601-1915.

The raven

By E. Yaghi

Once upon a dreary Plutonian shore in the saintly days of yore, a stately raven cawed to himself boasting, "I'm king of my island! All the birds in the forest are my subjects and they eagerly fly to do my bidding!"

But one afternoon as the vain raven perched on a fragrant Gilead tree, admiring his ebony sleek feathers which emitted a glossy sheen in the sunlight, a flock of falcons invaded Plutonia. By trickery, shrewdness and force, they intended to conquer and make the peaceful Plutonian island theirs. At first, fear gripped the raven and he was confused. He croaked, "Nevermore!" for he became neither really king of his feathery citizens nor subject of the invaders. Rather he became a puzzled onlooker to the conquest that stormed before his eyes. After the invasion, and things settled down a bit, the other native birds of the island resented the falcons. They were denied the freedom that they only recently had so dearly cherished and they had to be on constant guard for hungry falcons who hunted them for food. It became increasingly difficult for the birds to continue their lives as they had been accustomed prior to the invasion.

However, the raven possessed a keen mind and was perceptive, so he exclaimed, "My, I must say, I do admire those falcons. Look at how they fly and how they act and how they call to each other! I just adore their beautiful white feathers. Indeed, they are a stunning and rare breed!"

For the first time, he began to look critically at his image. "White is ever so much more elegant than black," he said ashamedly, gazing sternly at his disgusting coat of ebony feathers. "I wish I could screech like them too. Their call is so charming! I actually see myself clearly now and it seems I'm doing everything wrong! Even my choice of food is poor and my eating habits need to be much improved." And alas, even when the miserable once stately raven flapped against the wind with his strong wings over swirling mountains of frosty clouds, he noticed he lacked the command of his competitors.

"I must study their habits carefully," he squawked and so assigned for himself the task of falcon observing. He analysed everything the falcons did, every move they made, how they ate, flew, screeched and socialised. How he envied them! But the falcons barely tolerated the raven and hardly knew he was around. Certainly they would never try to eat him, for he was no young chick and his meat would prove tough and tasteless, so he had nothing to fear. Yet, he remained a raven nevertheless and failed to measure up to them, for after all, they were magnificent falcons.

Now, the raven possessed among his few meager talents, the art of imitation. With intense effort he tried his uttermost to act more falcon than crow. He emulated their walk, their flight, their squally speech and their hunting habits. He came very close to perfecting almost every trait of the falcons, but he could never quite get that perfect strut with his daily practices to walk like a falcon, but in vain.

Eventually, the falcons grew used to the raven. One sunny day when jasmine aroma penetrated the air, the raven overheard two falcons saying to one another, "Say, that old crow there isn't so bad after all. He acts more like us than anyone else. If only his walk wasn't so ridiculous!"

"Yeah," the second said. "He does walk funny at that. But remember how his feathers used to be dark and now

they're much lighter, almost like our feathers? You must admit that he's so good in his imitation of falcons that he even almost has us fooled. We must give him credit for all his efforts. So much better than all the other birds in Plutonia who have clung to their old habits and antiquated songs. But at least they're tasty anyway!"

Well, life went on pretty much as usual. The falcons kept up their lively hunts until they nearly depleted the bird stock on the island. Sometimes when they were in a good mood, they even included the raven in their hunting sports and every once in a while, they invited him to party with them in the long cool summer evenings. He usually proved to be a source of entertainment to them and something to laugh at and make jokes about. But as all good things come to an end as well as all bad, so did falcon life in Plutonia and the falcons had to move on in search of better feeding grounds. Thus, one crisp morning just as the sun radiated pink shadows in the purple sky, the falcons took off and ascended as a single force, beating their majestic wings against the summer breezes that rolled above the treetops. The raven was left behind. They had forgotten him! He was shocked. How could they desert him when he had almost become one of them? "I'll fly up and meet them, that's what I'll do. Now that I'm one of them there is no use for me on this island either. Nevermore will I belong to Plutonia!"

However, when he flew up to meet the group, he was met by the king of the falcons who squawked, "Fly away, go back to your Plutonian shores where you belong. You may look almost like us, talk like us, hunt and fly like us, but you'll never learn to walk like us and you're still raven and a crow by any other name is still crow. Get lost!"

The king of the falcons gave one loud whistle to his fellow falcons and they all took off in one mighty sweep and were soon gone beyond the rose horizon. The crow couldn't believe it. It couldn't be true. They had gone and left him. After all that he had done. After all he had sacrificed to be just like them and for what? For nothing! He was all alone. Not a friend in the world did he own. One great tear made its way out of his sad eyes and slipped with a splash onto the silver sand of his island. The raven was perplexed. He wasn't falcon, but he wasn't raven anymore either. Maybe he should have stayed the way he was. Had the falcons really been any better than he or any of the other birds on the island? Quite the opposite, he thought, for they had pillaged and undermined the importance of Plutonian self-dignity and self-esteem and imposed their new ways on an ancient habitat.

Betrayed, the dejected raven vowed, "I've greatly erred. I've tried too hard to be something I wasn't and never saw the value of being myself. I'm going to cast away everything falcon about me. I must try to remember my old ways and return to them."

Once again, with much endeavour, he began to almost fly like a raven, almost hunt like a raven. He almost ate and cawed like a raven and his feathers began to darken back to their former silky black gloss. Gradually he gained the confidence of the other remaining birds of Plutonia who disliked and mistrusted him during the falcon occupation. Once more he ruled his small enchanting island and became king of his flock again. But he never really perfected a raven walk and he had nearly forgotten the true value of being himself. He promised to his subjects as he perched stately upon an evergreen tree, "Nevermore will I be anything but what I am and will only search for ways to improve myself," said the raven. "Nevermore!"

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, Jan. 9

8:30 The Simpsons
9:10 NBA Basketball
10:00 News in English
10:20 Movie Of The Week
W.J.
Starring: Twiggy

Kate believes that her ex-husband is the one behind all the trouble that she and her current husband, Ben, confront in Los Angeles.

Friday, Jan. 10

8:30 Coach
An engagement ring for Christine creates problems for Hayden far beyond his imagination.

9:10 Derrick

Confessing to a murder is not always enough for Derrick to rap-up a murder case.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Chancer

Killing Floor

Stephen is fired from his job and so is his girlfriend. He joins Douglas Motors and manages to save the 50 cars bought by a Japanese businessman whose cheque was not cleared.

Saturday, Jan. 11

8:30 American Home Video

9:00 Encounter

9:30 Butterflies

The fantastic world of butterflies in Australia — their customs, colours and way of life.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Feature Film



Craig T. Nelson stars as college football coach Hayden Fox in the comedy series Coach on Channel 2 Friday at 8:30 p.m.

Angel Of Death
Starring: Gregory Harrison
During a successful attempt to escape from jail, Garry kills a policeman. Later he reaches where Laura and her son Josh live.

Sunday, Jan. 12

8:30 Empty Nest

The family dog, Draphions, is having a problem with eating and everybody is worried.

9:10 Nippon

The Shock Effect

For a country with virtually no natural resources of her own, the 1973 oil crisis threatens disaster for Japan's industrial future. But by skillfully tuning her economy to use fewer imported raw materials and more brain power in the new science-based industries, Japan recovers, and gains the competitive edge.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Gabriel's Fire

Finger On The Trigger

Monday, Jan. 13

8:30 Hey Dad

Nadge and Simon, his girlfriend, are arguing over \$5 that she borrowed from him a month ago. He wants her to pay him back the money with interest in order to invest them in business.

9:10 Capital City

Wendy, the floor director, is offered a senior post in Frankfurt but turns it down out of loyalty to Shane Dealers.

10:00 News in English

10:20 The Elite

An exciting adventure by a group of experts who can stop the melting of a nuclear reactor and recapture two

kilogrammes of stolen platinum.

Tuesday, Jan. 14

8:30 Evening Shade

The coach gives the students a lecture on football during the break and afterwards gives them a lecture in mathematics which makes them sleep.

9:10 Colour In The Creek

The boy meets Alec, the pilot, who notices the boy's enthusiasm in flying. So he offers to take him in his aeroplane for a short flight.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Titmus Regained

Tomorrow
Titmus marries (Gennie) and they spend their honeymoon in Italy. Then they come back to live in the palace. Titmus is jealous of Gennie's ex-husband and he steals his photograph from her album.

Wednesday, Jan. 15

8:30 Teech

Mr. Gibson is in love with an actress.

9:10 Voice Of The Planet

Extinction
Living species are endangered by extinction. The evil begins with man's laziness and unless people wake up a disaster will take place.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Voices Within

A very moving mini-series about child abuse and its long standing effect on family life and on the children after they grow up and start raising families themselves.

Kingsley may upstage Beatty at Oscar time

By Dan Cox
Reuter

for best supporting actor. Kingsley rocketed to fame in 1980 when he won the best actor Oscar for Gandhi.

The new film, directed by Barry Levinson and written by James Toback, chronicles the creation of Las Vegas by mobster Benjamin "Bugsy" Siegel, who used more than \$6 million in mob money to build his dream of a casino resort in the desert.

Beatty, who co-produced the movie, portrays the violent, touch-talking Siegel.

"I think it's a great tragedy," Kingsley said of his latest role as he relaxed in a New York hotel room recently.

"I said to Barry at the beginning of shooting that it has the magnificence of great



Kingsley in his Oscar-winning role as Gandhi

tragedy." Levinson asked Kingsley to join the film just 10 days before shooting started. The actor, whose English stage

training better equipped him to interpret Shakespeare than play a mobster, plunged wholeheartedly into the role.

Kingsley said he spent all 10 days immersing himself in literature on the famed gangster. To transform his crisp English speech into Lansky's Brooklynese, he watched video tapes of the mobster testifying before a congressional subcommittee on organized crime.

Kingsley said it was Lansky's ironic wit that drew him into the role.

"Meyer's a very successful Jewish businessman who happens to work for organized crime," Kingsley said. "That is the irony. That's the ironic wit."

Lansky, who died of cancer in 1983, amassed a multi-million dollar personal fortune through illegal gambling, bootlegging, loansharking and stock manipulation. He developed a reputation as a quiet man who ran his business with an iron hand.

Kingsley said he used the late film producer Sam Spiegel (Bridge Over The River Kwai and The African Queen) as a model to recreate that presence.

"Sam had that immense security in his own person," said Kingsley. "He was so elegant, so confident, never having to raise his voice."

Kingsley said he shies away from comparisons to Lee Strasberg's portrayal of Lansky in Godfather II. Strasberg, famed for his method acting technique, dazzled critics with his performance as the mobster in his later years.

Kingsley learned his craft in early career stints with the Royal Shakespeare and Royal Court Theatre companies in London.

The Oscar for Gandhi elevated the slight, bespectacled actor overnight into leading role status.

Despite being besieged with hundreds of film offers during the last decade, Kingsley has stuck to projects that he respects, including the screen version of Harold Pinter's Betrayal.

Bugsy is his first venture



Ben Kingsley

into the Hollywood studio system, which he found "exciting and very energising."

Currently working with Robert Redford on his second American feature Sneakers, Kingsley said he

would love to win his second Oscar for his Lansky role.

"I don't know an actor who wouldn't love getting an Oscar," he said. "Even the thought of it makes my heart beat faster."

In Europe's film world, tastes rarely coincide

Penelope Hocking-Vigie
Reuter

Paris, France — As European Community countries ve to harmonise film classification, different attitudes towards sex and violence on the screen are proving a major stumbling block.

Around 200 experts from public and private broadcast organisations met in the French city of Nice recently to tackle the radical differences in what is or isn't acceptable.

national rules classifying is for cinema screening ally stop children witnessing disturbing scenes. The film arises when the films issued in video form or based on television, there-reaching a much wider audience.

Delegates at November's annual European Television Film Forum, organised the Manchester-based

European Institute, said France, the Netherlands and Portugal had a more liberal approach to films than their European neighbours.

Britain exercises the tightest controls, and its strict standards are willingly accepted by some other countries, especially Germany.

Violence — including insidious scenes of domestic violence — is the main target for the British.

According to James Ferman, director of the British Board for Film Classification (BBFC), many highly popular films — mostly American — released for general viewing in Europe contain scenes of violence or sex which make them unsuitable for video or television.

In Rambo II, for example, the muscle-bound American actor Sylvester Stallone made much use of a wicked-looking knife. The knife became a cult symbol among teenage boys.

"As a result, knife wounds reached their highest level in Britain since the Second World War," Mr. Ferman told delegates.

A scene showing a wealthy New Yorker sniffing cocaine in the comic box-office hit Crocodile Dundee also became a source of concern to British police when the potent drug "crack" came on to the market.

The BBFC asked for 15 cuts to Kevin Costner's film Robin Hood, Prince of Thieves, to make the video version suitable for home viewing. One scene in which a prisoner had his hand cut off was considered too gory for young appetites.

And in 1990's most popular family film Ghost, the BBFC found a scene showing a couple's hands on slippery clay turning on a potter's wheel sexually provocative and made sure the television version was less erotic.

In Germany, violent scenes



Sylvester Stallone with his wicked-looking knife in Rambo.

can be accepted if the overall message of the film is against violence. Ironically, while sadistic and pornographic German-made video-cassettes are banned at home, they are on sale in other European capitals.

Finding a common approach is complicated by the different theological and philosophical traditions in each country.

In Scandinavia, nudity does not have sexual connotations and is acceptable. But in Britain, though female nudity now passes, male nudity still raises eyebrows, as does bad language.

The American film Beverly Hills Cop was cut for British prime-time television audiences because of the swearing by leading actor Eddie Murphy.

"Bad language is a typical-

ly protestant idea," said Karl-Gunnar Lidstrom, adviser to the Swedish culture minister. "In Sweden, it tends to have blasphemous rather than sexual overtones."

Technology makes it easy to transmit programmes across borders. Czechoslovakia recently opened a new channel, OK3, which broadcasts American and European programmes, some directly by satellite.

Complaints have been made about films from the Luxembourg-based television station RTL, judged to be cheap and sleazy.

Joachim von Gotteberg, representing a German watchdog organisation, said the speed of technical advances made it necessary to adopt a common approach now.

"Television stations will go

to the most liberal countries for their programmes," he warned.

Directives from the EC Commission in Brussels setting standards of what is acceptable in films only came into force in October, so their effectiveness has yet to be gauged.

While countries may adopt stricter rules for their own showing, they must allow free circulation of programmes from other member countries if they comply with the directives.

"But the language barrier means the problems won't be as great as some people fear," said Brussels lawyer Francois Jougen. "Organisations which want to broadcast internationally will tend to adopt a profile acceptable to everyone."

Ingmar Bergman's new film — a 6-hour love story

By Lars Foyen
Reuter

STOCKHOLM — After decades of exploring the darker side of the human condition, Ingmar Bergman has concluded it is love that makes the world go round.

Bergman wrote the script and raised the money for the film Best Intentions, which has its television premiere over Christmas. But he left the directing to the Oscar-winning Dane Bille August.

Based on the first 10 years of his parents' troubled marriage, it is a love story infused with many underlying themes.

"It is a journey through the complicated labyrinths of love, a peek into its most secret rooms," said August after a press preview.

The 70 million crown (\$12 million) film — the most expensive in Scandinavian history — was financed by television companies in Scandinavia, Britain, France, Germany and Italy. It began as a six-hour TV series starting on Christmas Day in the Nordic area.

The movie version, running at two hours and 45 minutes, is due to have its premiere at the Cannes Film Festival in May, August said. The TV series will be available to non-Scandinavian viewers from 1993.

The film has already received its most crucial review, from Bergman himself, who kept his promise not to look over August's shoulder during shooting.

"Ingmar saw it a few weeks ago and was very happy. He hugged me and said he was overwhelmed," said 41-year-old August, whose 1989 Oscar for Pelle, The Conqueror made him Bergman's undisputed successor as Scandinavia's leading film director.

Bergman, 73, retired from movie-making almost 10 years ago with the Oscar-winning Fanny And Alexander, the grand finale of a career spent exploring themes such as guilt, sexual torment, repression and the vain search for the meaning of life.

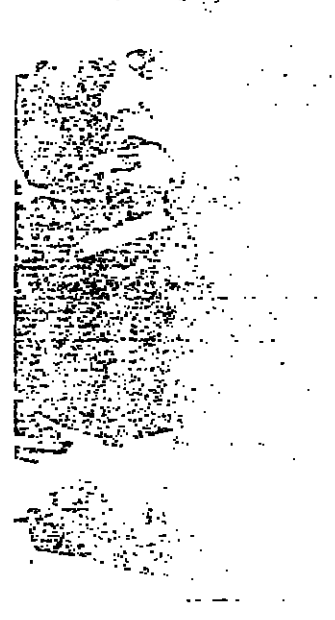
But Bergman wouldn't be Bergman if Best Intentions was simply a romantic love story. "It is about love between man and woman, parents and children. It is about brotherly love and love of God. And it is about love as a seductive and destructive force," August said.

The film begins in 1909 in the university town of Uppsala when Henrik Bergman, a poor theology student, falls in love with Anna Akerblom, a wilful upper-class girl.

Their romance is fiercely resisted by Anna's domineering mother who resorts to blackmail and even intercepts a vital letter with the aim of destroying their relationship.

Bergman, whose 1987 autobiography Laterna Magica related his childhood punishment, guilt and humiliation, has described Best Intentions as a way of reconciling himself with his parents who died some years ago.

But August stressed the film was not a documentary. "Don't forget it was written by a master of fiction," he said.



Ingmar Bergman

"She has the best intentions. She is convinced they are not suited for each other, and she is right. But her manipulative love for her daughter is almost criminal," August said.

The film is a colourful fresco of Sweden in the early 20th century, with the lavish wealth of Anna's home forming a stark contrast with a spartan vicarage in the northern Swedish wilderness where the young couple's marriage is put to the test.

Bergman, who remains active as a stage director, chose Pernilla August, the young Maj in Fanny And Alexander, to portray his mother. The director's father is played by Swedish actor Samuel Froler.

Max Von Sydow, Sweden's most famous actor, plays Bergman's maternal grandfather — a charming old man with a profound and gentle love for his daughter.

The film resembles Bergman's own work in its close-up, clear Nordic light and melancholy Scandinavian atmosphere. But the story is told in a simpler way without Bergman's artistic magic and penchant for shock effects.

"I had to trust my own intuition. Had I been rethinking all the time of how Ingmar would have done it, it would have resulted in a very bad film," August said.

The film ends in 1918, just before Bergman was born, with the couple determined to face the future together despite the incredible strains put on their relationship.

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David Bowie — Spiders From Mars to Tin Machine

By Mary Campbell
The Associated Press

W YORK — About 20 years ago, David Bowie became famous solo, as the strident ziggy Stardust. He backed by a band called Spiders From Mars.

Three years ago, he immersed himself in another band, Tin Machine.

Now, Bowie is in charge in Tin Machine. "Of course I am," he says with mock gravity. "Nobody can do a gig without my approval."

Then he smiles broadly to show he was kidding. "Absolutely not. This really is as unambiguously democratic as could possibly get in stardom. We are the epitome of socialism."

I thought we should defer to the person with the most experience. No one else in the band ever agrees with me," says Tin Machine guitarist Reeves Gabrels, who recently was interviewed by Bowie during a Tin Machine tour stop in New York.

The rest of the band — bassist Tony Sales and drummer Hunt Sales (sons of comedian Soup Sales) — and the backed Iggy Pop in 7.

Bowie says he was "fumbling on keyboards."

"We weren't collaborating. We were doing Iggy's music," Bowie said. "The nearest to Tin Machine I've been has been with Brian Eno in the late 1970s. We had the same equality between the two of us, throwing ideas backwards and forwards and mutating each other's ideas so to speak, seeing who could go further out than the other. There was a degree of sparring."

When Tin Machine goes into a recording studio, Gabrels says, "We take fragments and scraps of music in. They're thrown like bones to the dog. The group works on the stuff and turns it into something unrecognisable."

The band has made two albums, Tin Machine in 1989 and this year's Tin Machine II on the Victory Music label. Some critics have found the second better than the first. Bowie likes both, but thinks Tin Machine III will "be an interesting evolution for us, a cross-breeding between the two, with a third, yet-unknown ingredient."

The ingredient might be the saxophone. "I'm playing sax as much as I possibly can on stage," Bowie said. "I want to let loose and mess around in dark corners for awhile and see what I can

come up with. I've got some ideas. Hopefully we'll never get to 'let's try and make the last album again.' I never ever want to be there."

Has he been there? "Yes I have and it's a horrible place to be. I think after 'Let's Dance' (1983) I was in that situation, because of indifference. I was having a tough time in my personal life. I didn't feel drawn to music," he said.

"I compromised. Songs that were perfectly good. I didn't work on to the extent I should have. I get bad marks on that."

His personal life is fine now, Bowie says. He's engaged and plans to marry the international model Iman.

His son, Joey, is in college in the United States. "He has no ambition in music," Bowie said. "he's a very sensible young man."

Gabrels' wife, Sara, worked on Bowie's Glass Spider Tour which followed his 1987 Never Let Me Down album. Gabrels went along. "I don't think when we talked that I knew he played guitar," Bowie says. "I don't think we talked about music at all."

"You don't want to be received as someone who is being nice for the opportunity it could represent," Gab-

rels says.

Both Bowie and Gabrels have art school backgrounds.

"We talked a lot about art and architecture," Bowie said. "When you're not doing the music, it is almost the last thing you want to talk about. You want to get a life."

Sara Gabrels gave Bowie a tape of her husband's guitar playing. "I phoned him four or five months afterwards," Bowie says. "You end up with a suitcase full of cassettes on tour. Sometimes they're thrown on stage. The next few months I play a couple a day. Generally, after the first few notes you know what you're listening to and they go on the pile you won't listen to again."

"I heard Reeves and I thought, 'this guy can play' the second thing I thought is that he has a great sense of humour. There was a sense of irony in his playing. It appealed to me and my attitude to music."

So we called Gabrels and the Sales Brothers, and Tin Machine was born.

Now, Gabrels says, he's getting tapes. "Somebody gave me a computer disc the other day. It had a strip of tape. 'don't wait as long to listen to this as David did to listen to you.'"



David Bowie

When children don't thrive, doctors take over

By Philippa Neave

BOSTON — A gaunt-looking child with sunken eyes and a sullen face stares listlessly into space. But this sad toddler is not one of the developing world's hungry victims. He is deprived in the midst of plenty — in the United States, one of the richest countries in the world. His problem? Quite simply, malnutrition. Like an estimated 5.5 million other youngsters under the age of 12 in the U.S., this little boy does not get enough to eat.

"One in eight children in this country goes hungry," states Dr. Deborah Frank, pediatrician at Boston City Hospital's Growth Clinic. Dr. Frank heads what is known as the clinic's Growth Team, in charge of boosting the weight of under-sized children and teaching their mothers how to feed them properly, even on small incomes. But the clinic, widely recognized as one of the most advanced of its kind, also treats the whole child, focusing on the mental and psychological development of

youngsters who have been malnourished from an early age.

On this particular day, Dr. Frank is treating 40 small patients. In a given year, the 42-year-old doctor and her team will see around 300 mothers and their offspring. Most of the children are aged between a few weeks and three years. All of them suffer from the same illness: Failure to Thrive (FTT). FTT is the term doctors use to describe children who fail to grow and gain weight at rates that are normal for their age and sex. They are stunted, both physically and mentally, because they have been given the wrong foods, or not enough to eat.

The problem is on the increase, say doctors. They now agree that catching the children early, and adjusting their feeding habits, is the only way to avoid drastic problems later on. These may include highly damaging behavioural problems such as learning difficulties, dropping out of school, falling prey to drug-abuse and failure to hold down a job or relationship once they become adults.

Pediatricians now know that the early stages of a child's upbringing have a crucial impact on later life, and an adequate diet plays a vital role. Research has shown that in the first year of an infant's life, the brain grows to two-thirds of its adult size, increasing two and a half times in weight. "That is the critical period in terms of brain growth so it is particularly important not to allow children to become malnourished in the first year of life," said Dr. Frank. "It is important at any age, but if children become malnourished in their first year, it will affect their brain size throughout their life."

"We have a large number of children in our schools who are difficult to teach because of early malnutrition," she added. "It has been shown that kids who have been given supplemental feeding in the first two years of life have higher grade-point averages and fewer behavioural problems than their own siblings who didn't get it."

Studies conducted in the developing world — specifically in India, Africa and South America — have revealed that children who suffer from malnutrition at an early age have a greater risk of school failure and more social and emotional problems. "They typically have lower developmental test scores, difficulties with attention and a host of other problems," said Dr. Frank. But the shocking thing, she says, is that malnutrition should be so prevalent in the developed world. "In the United States, the problem is obviously not as severe as in some countries, but here it should not exist."

The majority of children who suffer from FTT in the U.S. come from poor families. A survey at Boston City Hospital showed that 10 per cent of low-income children in the area are abnormally

According to Dr. Deborah Frank, most of the children with growth problems come from poor families and recent immigrant communities.

small for their age. Dr. Frank is fiercely critical of a system which, she claims, allows too many families to fall into the poverty trap. In the U.S., the minimum wage is \$4.45 an hour, while a liter of milk costs around \$1.25. "Even if both parents are working full-time at the minimum wage, if they have two children, they are below the poverty line," said the pediatrician. A sharp increase in the number of single-parent families has exacerbated the problem. About two-thirds of black children are born to unmarried women, statistics show. About half of all households headed by women live in poverty, compared with 8 per cent of the two-parent families.

Many of the parents who bring their children to Dr. Frank's clinic are immigrants. Boston has sizeable communities of Haitians, Central Americans and South East Asians, a large majority of whom live on or below the poverty line. "The low-income families simply don't have the money to pay for an adequate diet after they have paid for their other non-negotiable expenses — particularly housing and heating," said Dr. Frank. "In the winter time, we find the rates of malnutrition going up."

For immigrant communities, poverty is compounded by language difficulties. Said Dr. Frank: "Immigrants who

would be perfectly competent in selecting foods for their baby if they had access to their markets back home are lost. They don't speak or read English and if you put them in an American supermarket, unless they have been specifically instructed as to what the right American foods are for children, they don't have a clue."

That is a relatively easy problem to fix, says the doctor, who has hired interpreters and bilingual staff at the clinic to help newcomers. There are special cases, such as very young or intellectually-impaired mothers, or children whose parents have alcohol or drug problems. Dr. Frank is an expert at treating infants who have been exposed to cocaine inside the mother's womb.

But most of the time, malnutrition is the result of plain hardship. "There's a lot of blaming-the-victim in this business," said the doctor. "In general, low-income people spend their food-dollar more wisely than higher-income people. It is a myth that the mother is spending money on candies because in general, low-income women are very good 'stretchers.'"

Getting an undernourished child to a normal health condition is an uphill task.

"Once a child has become underweight, it needs to take one-and-a-half to twice the number of calories as a child of the same age to make up the deficit," said Dr. Frank. "You cannot simply feed a child twice the volume of food because it will just vomit. You have to enrich the caloric and nutritional value of every bite they get."

There are many ways of doing this. Dr. Frank recommends adding a drop of oil or extra milk-powder to soups and liquid foods as well as extra butter, cheese or peanut butter on every cracker. At the Boston clinic, there is a constant supply of crackers on hand, and young patients are encouraged to eat as many as they want.

"It's almost the opposite of a prudent diet!" she said. The doctor also suggests cutting out all low-nutritional products that fill children's stomachs without giving them any benefit, such as carbonated drinks. It is much better to drink milk, she says. "One of the best things the world around to ensure an adequate diet for very young children is breast feeding," said the pediatrician. "It is the perfect diet for infants." After four to five months, the mother can add mashed beans or other nutritious traditional foods.

At the clinic, the small patients are carefully monitored with growth and weight charts and special calipers to measure body fat. Head circumference is also measured as doctors look for proportional imbalances — a sure sign of malnourishment. Said Dr. Frank: "We aim at what we call 'catch-up growth,' meaning we try to get these kids growing faster than normal. We also check them very carefully developmentally and refer them to educational as well as counselling and support services."

Children who don't eat



The Boston clinic's patients are carefully monitored with growth and weight charts. Body calipers are used to measure body fat.

properly risk falling into what Dr. Frank calls the "infection-malnutrition cycle." An undernourished child is more susceptible to illness, and each bout leaves him more underweight. Colds, flu and ear-infections all double a child's nutritional needs, doctors have found.

Mothers who themselves are malnourished also have a tendency to produce premature, underweight babies. "If you want to prevent child malnutrition you need to feed mothers and provide them with good pre-natal care," said Dr. Frank. But while most FTT cases are found in children from poor backgrounds, the condition can arise in well-heeled families. Factors include lack of harmony in the home and confrontational problems between parent and child at mealtimes. "The classic ex-

ample is parents yelling at each other at the dinner table and the child will not eat, so they turn to yell at the child," said Dr. Frank.

The toddler "feeding struggle" is a problem that spans all social classes and causes mothers around the world to despair as their child stubbornly refuses to eat. "Children have a very normal and healthy drive for independence," said Dr. Frank. "It starts at about nine months and what parents have to do is develop a tolerance for messiness and allow the child to hold its own spoon and wave it around. Give children foods they can hold and feed to themselves so the child feels in control. Bananas are a wonderful food for babies. Kids would rather exert their independence than fill their stomach, so you can't fight that —" World News Ltd.



Measuring the circumference of a child's head is one way to discover proportional imbalances in undernourished children.

U.S. approves drug to halt precocious sexual maturing

By Paul Recer
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A synthetic hormone has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment of precocious puberty, a condition that causes sexual development to start in very young children.

The drug, called Histrelin Acetate, restores normal hormone levels and halts the onset of premature puberty. About 6,000 U.S. children have this condition and about 2,000 new cases are diagnosed annually. World-wide figures on incidents of the disease were not immediately available.

In the most common form of the disorder, called idiopathic central precocious

puberty, very young children began developing adult sexual characteristics. Girls may experience breast enlargement, menstruation and growth of pubic hair before the age of eight. In boys, there may be facial and pubic hair, penile and testicular enlargement and a lowered voice range before the age of nine.

Such children may have an initial growth spurt, but their bones mature early and they often do not reach full adult height.

Histrelin Acetate, marketed under the brand name Supprelin by Ortho Pharmaceuticals of Raritan, New Jersey, is given in once-daily injections. Directions for the drug emphasize that the injections must be given at the same time each day. The in-

jections must continue until the patient achieves the appropriate age for puberty onset.

Rich Salem, a spokesman for Ortho, said a marketing plan has not been developed for the drug and no date for its general availability or price has been established.

He said the drug will only be available in the United States and has not been used in any other country.

In clinical trials with 183 children, Histrelin Acetate was shown to restore proper hormone balance and to stop premature sexual development. Full adult height becomes attainable with the drug, the FDA said.

Five per cent of patients in the study experienced some skin reactions, such as red-

ness, swelling and itching. The injection site, and 22 per cent of the female patients experienced light vaginal bleeding during the first month of treatment, the FDA said.

The drug was given orphan status in 1988, a designation that provides incentives to pharmaceutical companies to develop drugs benefiting fewer than 200,000 persons. Among the incentives are special tax breaks for the development costs and the exclusive U.S. marketing right for the drug for seven years.

Dr. David A. Kessler, the FDA commissioner, said the precocious puberty can cause great emotional stress in that the condition previously was not well controlled.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

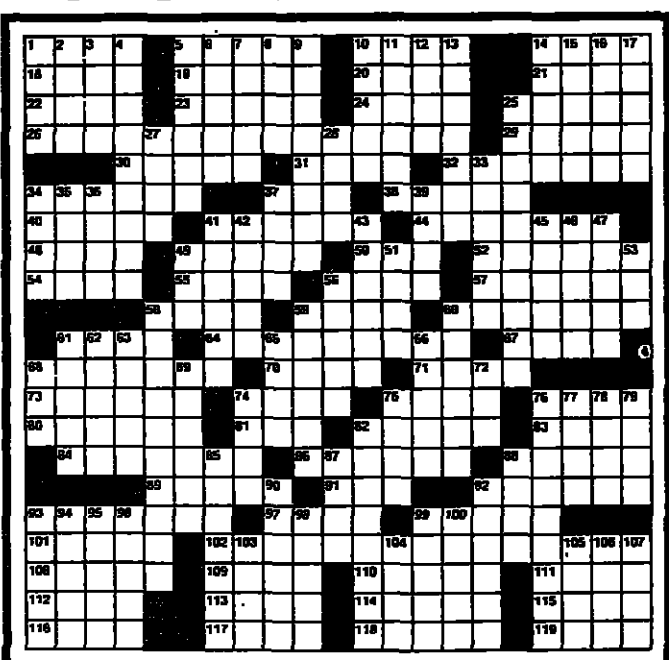
JUST KIDDING!
By Olive Duan

- ACROSS
1. Ruminant
 2. Gem weight
 3. Spoke
 4. Impudence
 5. About
 6. (Approximately)
 7. Source of Mania
 8. Dr. — with (equal)
 9. Opp
 10. Against
 11. Runk frantically
 12. Whining sound
 13. Hard
 14. What a weary doctor might say
 15. Fiber plant
 16. Pinpoint
 17. Intertile
- DOWN
1. Objective
 2. Part of A.D.
 3. Would a high-priced lawyer handle a —
 4. Cockle
 5. Maternal
 6. Intimate
 7. Recorded
 8. Most savory
 9. Confusion of voices
 10. Thrills
 11. Fed agent
 12. In — (like with)
 13. Beat it
 14. Fragrance
 15. Juniper
 16. Dulcet

34. Zodiac sign
37. Closest
38. Throw about
40. Tiny amounts
41. Barflies
44. Land holdings
46. Air antiques
49. Understand?
50. Stream
52. Where poplars
54. Pie's a night
55. QED word
56. New word
57. Rains or Moner
58. Friend
59. Meagres
60. Restrained
61. "vid. vid."
64. What a dashing lumbar do?

67. — do-well
68. Coverings of mammals
70. Raises the hackles of
71. Chronic
73. Sprinkles
74. Grooves
75. Hawaiian port
76. Warm-out horses
78. Despot's ruler
81. Eskimo knife
82. Manipulate
83. Motone case
84. "ant" —?
86. Synch
88. Corolla part
89. Pub game
91. Ende
92. Scholastic prig

93. Nonsense
97. Flat-bottomed boat
99. Exhaust
101. Medicine
102. Would a hard-up barber do this?
105. Waiting for the
107. Put forth, as
110. Upright leader
112. Rapports
113. Waiting for the
114. Hair preparation
115. FBI agent
116. Being
117. Bed support
118. Guide
119. Whet



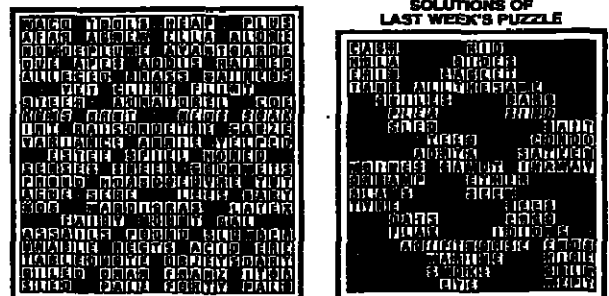
Last Week's Cryptograms

1. To plant a mammoth tree is to plant a future breeze and a blisful zone of shade from the sun.
2. Window washer yells "Whoops," quite, and goes home, as he drops his squeegee from twenty-fifth floor.
3. Praying mantis under his paw made bang over parishioner so very uneasy he wept.
4. Delighted customer makes big bucks on broken automated teller at branch bank.

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. YTWO GHAO YOECTIK KOUHILPY: IVEREX
AVERY, YLEW AUWY, AUTRYPOYOK
TXPOVY, ECK YOUNCHYL YLOUCHYL.
2. JK LMNOPQR, RXJYZ BEN AQMAR CJNX
QMD AJOKNOJ JLPBFD JNMBD JON
DEBZEX QXJNIN KBRJYN QMD JNBCK
JCBNX.
3. UNBZBUOS UNBZBUSY, ER DEZJNYCC
BZ USODBJZ DOUBLES DOUBLOS EC LE
JOYZ PELYN HOPEN.
4. MYTYSOB PLAYS ZAPDOSOB XT MXZ
ZAPDOB BOPAM ZLOTO.

- By Lela B. Jones
- By Philip Brennan
- By Ed Haddleton
- By Barbara J. Rugg



Vitamin C deficiency leads to genetic damage in sperm — study

By Paul Recer
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Men with low levels of Vitamin C are more apt to have genetically damaged sperm, researchers say in a study to be published Sunday.

Bruce Ames, leader of a Vitamin C study at the University of California, Berkeley, said that an analysis of sperm from 24 men showed that of 15 with below normal levels of Vitamin C, eight had high levels of genetically damaged sperm.

"We know that you get into trouble if your level of Vitamin C drops below the recommended daily allowance," said Dr. Ames.

The level of damage found in the sperm would not affect fertility, Dr. Ames said, adding that much of the damage would be repaired naturally after conception.

But, said Dr. Ames, any genetic damage in the sperm increases the risk that these natural genetic repairs would fail and that a child conceived of that sperm will have a birth defect.

The scientist said oxidants, which are products of metabolism, destroy chemical compounds within the genes. Vitamin C, or ascorbic acid, is a primary antioxidant, which is a nutrient that blocks the damage from oxidants.

The recommended daily allowance for Vitamin C, set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), is 60 milligrams. Dr. Ames said he believes this amount is only barely enough for most people and, for smokers, may be far below what is needed to maintain health. Chemicals in cigarette smoke, he said, destroy some benefits of

Vitamin C, and, as a result, smokers need to consume more ascorbic acid to maintain the proper level of Vitamin C.

Dr. Ames said that in a parallel study, Robert A. Jacob, a USDA biochemist, put 10 men on a closely monitored diet. The men initially received 250 mg of Vitamin C daily for two weeks. Then they were dropped to only 5 mg daily for a month, followed by another month at 10 mg daily.

An analysis of sperm samples from the men while they were deprived of Vitamin C found that the genetic damage was twice as high as when the men were on 250 mg of the Vitamin.

In still another part of the study, Gladys Block, a UC Berkeley epidemiologist, surveyed Vitamin C blood levels in men and found that about

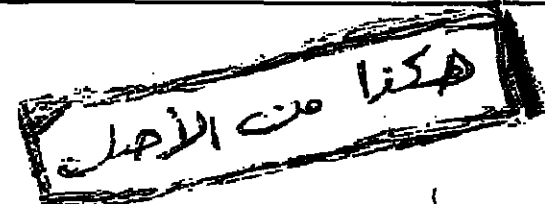
25 per cent of black males in the range where genetic damage to sperm would be expected.

Dr. Ames said the amount of damage found in the sperm studies was implied by tests for the level of oxidized guanine, an organic compound that is one of the bases in deoxyribonucleic acid, or DNA, the molecule that carries the genetic code.

The level of Vitamin C determined by measuring ascorbic acid in seminal fluid and an ejaculation product that concentrates the vitamin.

A single orange is enough to provide the minimum daily requirement of 60 mg, said Ames. The vitamin also is contained in many other fruits and vegetables.

The researcher said Americans do not eat enough of these foods.



Delegates

(Continued from page 1)

Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli tracks in the bilateral negotiations," Dr. Khatib said.

He added that the U.S. administration had used the time between the first round of talks in Washington and the second one expected to begin next week "to conduct effective and active contacts" with the parties to the Middle East talks.

"The U.S. did not waste time," Dr. Khatib said. "They have tried to bring the Arab and Israeli positions closer on the issue of tracks," he added.

"The U.S. has tried and continues to try to be marginally positive with us," Dr. Khatib said.

"This package of developments, we believe, will increase the chances of resolving the procedural problems," he said.

On another level, Dr. Khatib said, the internal Israeli situation also indicates a number of important factors which weighed against each other could also signal a positive trend towards the Palestinian cause.

He explained that two right-wing ministers in the Israeli cabinet have already announced their intention to resign if the Israeli delegation to the Middle East peace talks discusses issues of substance, including interim self-government arrangements.

He said that although this situation could signal a problem for the Palestinian negotiating position, the advent of the deadline for a \$10 billion loan guarantees bill for Israel could encourage the U.S. to use its leverage on Israel and increase the pressure for halting settlements in the occupied territories.

Dr. Khatib said that increased pressure would place Israel in a dilemma, especially that in its 1992 fiscal budget it had already assumed that it would receive loans of \$2 billion.

"If it does not get the \$2 billion

then this would lead to confusion in the budget," he said.

In the final analysis, Dr. Khatib said, Israel may, in the medium term find itself facing one of two choices: Either it would halt settlements or the government would collapse.

Although these two assumptions are based on predictions that the U.S. would increase pressure on Israel, Dr. Khatib said, "Either conclusion would not be negative from a Palestinian perspective and therefore we think that continuing negotiations is a feasible option at this time."

On the other hand, Dr. Saeb Ureikat, also a Palestinian negotiator, said that the Palestinians were "not interested in returning to the corridors this time around."

He pointed out that there was hope that "this problem would be solved by the co-sponsors" of the Middle East talks.

He pointed out, however, that the Palestinians "will not ask the Americans to negotiate on our behalf but when we speak of its role as a catalyst, in chemistry terms, it is the variable that can give us results, but this variable can also evaporate."

Dr. Ashrawi, in statements to the Associated Press, said the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to peace talks with Israel will split into two teams during the upcoming negotiations.

She also said the Palestinians were "prepared to engage in real and substantial negotiations to achieve an end to Israel's occupation of the territories and a transfer of authority to Palestinians."

Dr. Ashrawi said Wednesday that Palestinians expected to "start the upcoming bilateral negotiations on the basis of two tracks, one Palestinian-Israeli and the other Jordanian-Israeli."

"As we heard in Israeli statements, they are prepared to start the talks with a tripartite meeting of the three heads of the delegations (Jordanian, Palestinian and Israeli), and then begin negotiating with each delegation separately," she said.

Exchanges

(Continued from page 1)

the height of a dinar crisis — accentuated by the Kingdom's \$8.3 billion foreign debt burden — during which the currency lost 50 per cent of its value.

Banking experts said they expected the new law to eliminate the black market in foreign exchange and to go a long way in restoring confidence in the Jordanian economy and currency.

For several months now, the

difference between the CBI-set official foreign exchange rates and the black market rates has been relatively insignificant — less than two per cent — and officials have said that direct government intervention in the market was warranted only if the difference exceeds 10 per cent.

"No more street-side 'exchange houses,'" said a banking executive referring to the dozens of individual operators who could be seen in downtown Amman offering to buy and sell foreign currency.

Dialogue

(Continued from page 1)

U.N. Security Council resolution condemning Israel for its decision to expel 12 Palestinians has been seen as a positive sign by Palestinians hoping for a resumption of diplomatic exchange between Washington and the PLO.

"There are many things happening that are leading to an improvement of relations," said Dr. Abdul Rahman. "I was denied a visa to the U.S. for 23 years. About three months back the Americans gave me a visa. Things are changing between the U.S. and us, slowly but surely."

Palestinians critical of the sincerity of the ongoing negotiations saw things in a different light however. "Nabil Shath is closer to the American way of thinking than even some Israelis. So the American visa is a selective one, not a PLO visa as such," said Palestinian political scientist

Labib Kamhawi.

"The Americans know that a peace agreement with the Palestinians will have to be endorsed, if not signed, by the PLO, so they won't totally ignore the PLO," Dr. Kamhawi said.

The current situation suits well some factions of the PLO, Dr. Kamhawi says. "This way it will not be the PLO making concessions but others. Therefore, a failure of the talks to produce concrete results for the Palestinians will not be blamed on the PLO leadership but on those involved in the negotiations."

But when the American government can choose who it talks to from among the Palestinians, some feel that the gains for the Palestinians become insignificant. "Overall," says Dr. Kamhawi "the U.S. visa for Mr. Shath," who had been denied a visa during round two of the talks because he was a PLO official, is "an insignificant gain for the Palestinians."

Oil talks

(Continued from page 1)

dad wants changed in what it calls "a spider's web" of checks and controls on its exports is permission to export via its Gulf terminal at Mina Al Bakr to avoid the cost of piping oil through Turkey.

"I don't think it shall be a problem," Mr. Anbari said.

He also said that Iraq should be allowed to establish long-term contracts of at least one year with customers.

U.N. resolutions currently only permit oil sales for a six-month period.

The Iraqi representative said his country wanted normal procedures for imports and exports but was ready to provide some sort of transparency in its trade, while preserving its national integrity and sovereignty.

Asked whether these exploratory talks would reach the same impasse which has dogged the issue for the past four months, Mr. Anbari said: "Let's hope that that is not so."

In a related development, a senior U.N. official said hunger and disease are widespread in Iraq a year after the Gulf war and re-

quested U.N. funding would meet only urgent needs.

"There are still humanitarian needs to be covered to alleviate the suffering in many parts of the country," said Bert Bernander, who completes his assignment this week as coordinator of U.N. operations in Iraq.

"It looked much more promising nine months ago," Mr. Bernander told Reuters in Baghdad.

"It means that the humanitarian problems are still not resolved to where we can see light at the end of the tunnel."

Iraq's imports of food and medicine are largely blocked by the impounding of its funds abroad and the stalemate over resuming oil exports.

The U.N. asked members on Tuesday for \$145 million to fund operations in Iraq for the first half of the year.

"I draw the attention of the world community to the paradoxical nature of appealing for funds while Iraq could use existing funds if they were released," said Mr. Bernander.

U.N. officials in Geneva, where Tuesday's appeal was made, are pessimistic about their chances of getting the requested funding.

Algeria

(Continued from page 1)

second round, why have they deployed in regions where seats were decided at the first poll?" Mr. Hachani asked.

Last June, shortly before the original date for elections, the army announced it had deployed in major towns, saying it was there to prevent unrest during voting.

But President Chadli Benjedid then declared a state of siege to contain demonstrating FIS supporters who demanded an instant Islamic state without a vote. Fifty-five people were killed.

Veteran nationalist Hocine Ait Ahmad said that "nothing is lost" in the battle for democracy, de-

spite the fundamentalists' big lead.

"The Algerian people in their majority have not opted for the FIS," Mr. Ait Ahmad told the newspaper Le Matin.

"They had around three million votes... 24 per cent of the electorate... doesn't make an Islamic republic."

Mr. Ait Ahmad, the most prominent politician of Algeria's Berber minority, was one of the five top leaders of Algeria's 1954-62 war against French colonial rule.

He now heads the Socialist Forces Front which won 25 seats, mostly in Berber areas, in the first-round voting.

Mr. Hachani told the press conference there was no sign the

Bush collapse

(Continued from page 1)

tried to play down the episode, it raised fresh questions about Mr. Bush's health as he heads into a reelection campaign. The president was hospitalised last year after suffering a rapid heartbeat last May 4 at Camp David. His problem was later diagnosed as a thyroid ailment, Graves' Disease.

In Washington, Vice-President Dan Quayle was notified of Mr. Bush's illness and went immediately to the White House, although he planned to go ahead to New Hampshire for a campaign trip. Mr. Bush has been expected to announce for reelection after his Jan. 28 state of the union address.

Mr. Bush's five children also were notified.

"Nothing extraordinary has occurred," Mr. Fitzwater told reporters.

Mr. Bush had complained to a television interviewer earlier in the day that he had been having trouble sleeping, awakening at 3 a.m. The president said he had taken half a tablet of halcion, a popular sleeping aid, on Tuesday evening.

Mr. Fitzwater said Mr. Bush was examined at the dinner by his personal physician, Dr. Burton Lee. "All aspects of the examination indicate that it is a common case of the flu," Mr. Fitzwater said.

"Dr. Lee feels that there's no reason to believe there were any factors contributing than just the flu itself."

Officials described Mr. Bush's illness as gastroenteritis, which is sometimes called intestinal flu. But it is not the same as influenza.

Mr. Fitzwater said Mr. Bush had complained of flu symptoms earlier in the day but decided to go to the dinner anyway.

Television pictures showed people sitting nearby rushed to help Mr. Bush. At one point, the president's head was lifted above table height and he looked strained and pale.

Mr. Bush got to his feet a few minutes later, his hair dishevelled. Secret Service agents and National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft helped Mr. Bush down his rinstcoat, and a guard behind him helped pat his hair back into place.

After the president left the dinner, Mrs. Bush made brief remarks. "I can't explain what happened to George, because it never happened before, but I'm beginning to think it's the ambassador's (Michael Armacost, American ambassador to Japan) fault. (Laughter.) He and George played the emperor and the crown prince in tennis today, and they were badly beaten. (Laughter.) And we Bushes aren't used to that. So he felt much worse than I thought."

government was preparing for the second round, which is only seven days away.

"There is no action which proves that the government is preparing for the second round. The government has taken no measures to organise the election," he said.

"Up to today the number of candidates is not ready, the method of voting is not clear, or how the elections will be controlled. Even the form of the voting forms is unknown."

"We have asked the government for all this but received no reply," he said.

Candidates have however been allocated time on radio and television to broadcast their campaign messages.

The example of deaf people

By Thomas J. Fitzpatrick

LET me begin with the outrageous statement that every government in the world should have a deaf diplomat in the Ministry of International Affairs.

The Jesuit Centre in Amman is a place where programme are offered in religious education and development. The basic idea is that we are of service to the traditional Christian churches in these areas. Eventually we hope to be involved in dialogue with our Islamic brothers and sisters.

For about five months, a Jesuit priest named Joseph Bruce, S.J. is visiting the Jesuit Centre. He is Deaf. (Notice that Deaf is capitalised. Joe tells me that being Deaf is like being French or Jordanian or American. There is a whole culture indicated in being Deaf.) He is a volunteer at the Holy Land Institute for the Deaf in Salt and helping out at The Jesuit Centre in various services.

I have learned very much from Joe about being Deaf and what it means to be a member of the Deaf community. There are all those simple details that are different from ours, hearing people, for example, there must be enough light for a conversation with the Deaf or among the Deaf — because they must see what is being said. We hearing people can communicate in the dark; the Deaf cannot. Also in travelling in an automobile, if you want to speak with your Deaf friend he cannot drive because he cannot look at you and drive at the same time. Or, if there are three people in the car, the Deaf person must sit in the passenger seat in the front and the third person in the rear behind the driver, so the Deaf is able to have both easily in view.

And then there are all those aspects of being Deaf which touch much deeper realities. There is not an international sign language which permits all Deaf people in the world to communicate immediately with ease. But it is much easier for the Deaf of different nationalities to communicate with one another than for speaking people. I have been struggling with Arabic for five years and although not a complete failure, I feel I have not been successful beyond a few degrees higher than failure. Joe Bruce has arrived here recently and is in communication with Deaf Jordanians through the sign language so directly and quickly that it makes me only envious.

But beyond that there is a bonding amongst Deaf people that brings them together almost immediately. Because of their deafness, they share the Deaf culture which almost immediately opens the doors for a deep sense of oneness and communion among them. And this very much because of the common oppression and suffering they have experienced through the separation, isolation and loneliness in living in the hearing people's world.

Even in that area which is most divisive — religion — Deaf people seem to be able to be open and profoundly tolerant. The reality for Deaf people is that their community is based on the Deaf culture that they have had to shape as human beings in order to survive. No matter what good intentions hearing people have, in their world the Deaf are often left out — perhaps most of the time. If the Deaf have had difficulties all week in living and working in the hearing people's world and have felt isolated and even rejected, at the meeting of the Deaf Club on the weekend or at a liturgy offered for the Deaf on Sunday they have community. Human ideals and religious beliefs attain a whole different tone for the Deaf community. The Deaf are united by sharing the same Deaf culture and not separated by much which separates people in the hearing world.

I have noticed also that with the Deaf there is no loss of words. Because of the difficulties they have experienced in communication they tend to be very direct and even blunt. They get to the point very quickly. One reason Joe Bruce's sermons are moving is that they are simple, very direct and very much to the point.

I began with the outrageous statement that there should be a Deaf person in every government to deal with international affairs. I make this statement to dramatise a point: Deaf people are united beyond the divisions of ideologies, bureaucracies and even religion by their sharing a culture they have created in order to meet their common oppression and in order to survive. Such freedom is very much needed in our world of international intrigue, complexities and selfishness.

The Deaf community reminds us that the ideal for us all is to be bonded together on a deep human level. Our common experience of oppression of various kinds and suffering as human beings can bring us to levels deeper than ideologies, beliefs, and religious practices which separate us. Our common sufferings as human beings should be able to bring us together in freedom and tolerance to deal with the almost overwhelming problems of the world. If we are not free and tolerant in dealing with our problems in the world, then we will make them worse.

Ministers in governments have to be like Deaf people who are united and bonded together because of a deep human experience. Through the common sufferings of human beings we have to be free enough to deal with one another as human beings, far removed from those more superficial realities which separate us. Also, ministers should be like Deaf people in not wasting words and getting directly to the point.

THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN JORDAN ELECTRICITY AUTHORITY 132KV OVERHEAD TRANSMISSION LINE ZERKA-SABHA ADVERTISEMENT FOR ISSUE OF TENDERS FOR THE OVERHEAD TRANSMISSION LINE

Jordan Electricity Authority declare their intention to issue Tender Documents for supply and installation of 132KV double circuit overhead transmission line between Hussein Thermal Power Station at Zerka to a new substation in Sabha northeast of Jordan with a total length of about 40km. This project includes three separate tenders as follows:

Tender 46/91: This Tender includes the design, manufacture, testing and delivery of the Insulator sets and conductors and earthwire's fittings for the A/M line.

Tender 47/91: This Tender includes the design, manufacture, testing and delivery of the conductors and earthwires for this line.

Tender 48/91: This Tender includes:
A- Design, manufacture, testing and delivery of steel towers for the A/M line according to the issued General and Technical Conditions.
B- Receiving of other materials including insulator sets, conductors and earthwires from the owner.
C- Installation of the complete line according to the issued General and Technical Conditions.

Tenders must be submitted to Jordan Electricity Authority Head Offices located at Jabal Amman, Seventh Circle including a bid bond or certified cheque for a value of not less than 2% of the tender price.

Tender Documents can be obtained from Jordan Electricity Authority Head Offices starting from Wednesday 8.1.1992 against a receipt of payment or acceptable cheque for value of JD 100 for each of tenders 46/91 and 47/91 and JD 300 for tender 48/91.

In case that tenderer requires the tender documents to be sent to him by mail, the air mail cost will be added. The latest date for submission of tenders is not later than 12 o'clock Jordan time on 13.4.1992.

The offers should be valid for 150 days from the submission date.

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الحسين في زركا

Sabatini breezes into 2nd round at New South Wales Open

SYDNEY (AP) — Top-seeded Gabriela Sabatini of Argentina showed no effects of a long Christmas break in downing Manon Bollegraf in the second round of the New South Wales Open Wednesday.

Sabatini, ranked third in the world, overpowered Bollegraf 6-0, 6-1, with a dazzling array of spinners from the baseline, unruffled by a rain delay midway through the match.

The beleaguered Bollegraf raised her arms in victory after finally holding serve while already down 3-0 in the second set.

In her first match since the Virginia Slims Championship in late November, Sabatini served notice she is in good form to challenge Monica Seles and Steffi Graf when the Australian Open, a two-week Grand Slam event, starts in Melbourne next Mon-

day. "I've been working pretty hard (and) I'm playing good tennis. Physically, I feel very good," said Sabatini, who had a first-round bye and avoided a rash of upsets that has depleted the tournament of seeded players the first two days.

In the men's draw, three seeds advanced to the quarterfinals despite periodic showers that halted play several times and forced postponement of several matches.

Defending champion Guy Forget of France, the highest remaining seed at No. 3, beat Javier Sanchez of Spain 6-2, 6-4. He will face American Aaron Krickstein, a 4-6, 6-3, 6-3 winner over Cristiano Caratti of Italy.

Christian Bergstrom of Sweden scored a 6-3, 2-6, 6-1 victory over No. 4 Petr Korda of Czechoslovakia to earn a berth against no. 5

Magnus Gustafsson of Sweden or Omar Camporese of Italy.

No. 7 Emilio Sanchez of Spain downed Australia's John Fitzgerald 6-4, 6-4 and will play Thomas Muster of Austria, who ousted hometown hero Todd Woodbridge 6-4, 3-6, 6-4. Woodbridge knocked out top-seeded Michael Stich a day earlier.

American David Wheaton, the No. 8 seed, bounced back from a second-set service break to beat France's Olivier Delaure 6-4, 6-3. He's matched against either hard-serving Dutchman Richard Krajicek or Jakob Hlasek of Switzerland. Krajicek defeated No. 2 seed Ivan Lendl Tuesday.

In other women's second-round matches at the White City Complex in midtown Sydney, No. 3 Jana Novotna advanced when American Patty Fendick injured her right knee after losing the first set and falling behind 2-1

in the second.

No. 8 Anke Huber of Germany, No. 10 Helena Sukova of Czechoslovakia, No. 13 Julie Halard of France and No. 15 Gigi Fernandez also advanced to the third round, along with unseeded Kimiko Date of Japan and Barbara Rittner of Germany.

Rittner ousted 16th-seeded Radka Zrubakova of Czechoslovakia, the fifth seed to fall by the second round of this \$560,000 event.

Both Sabatini and Novotna agreed that Seles remains the woman to beat at the Australian Open.

"Monica is at the top," said Novotna, ranked seventh in the world. "She hits hard and moves well."

Sabatini added: "To beat Monica Seles, you have to mix up your game, do different things all the time."

French motorcyclist killed in Paris-Cape Town rally

BRAZZAVILLE, Congo (Agencies) — A French motorcyclist, Gilles Lalay, was killed in a crash in Congo during the 13th stage of the Paris-Cape Town Rally, raising the death toll for the three-week endurance race to three.

Lalay, 29, won the event in 1989 when it was the Paris-Dakar Rally.

His Yamaha motorcycle collided with one of the organizers' vehicles in the town of Dolisie during the stage between Franceville, Gabon and Pointe-Noire, Congo.

Rally officials in Paris said the circumstances of the accident remained unclear. But Prosper Tekes, a hospital official in Dolisie, said Lalay broke his neck in a collision with a car driven by one of the medics accompanying the rally.

Tekes said police were investigating the incident. Lalay, married with two children, was a member of the Yamaha-Byrd team of Italy and was in seventh place in the motorcycle competition. Wagner, was in ninth place.

The rally also includes divisions for cars and light trucks.

Lalay's death was the third in less than two weeks after two support personnel were killed on Dec. 27 when their Range Rover flipped over during the second stage of the rally in Libya.

Yzaga, Zoecke cause upsets in N. Zealand Open

AUCKLAND, New Zealand (AP) — Jaime Yzaga of Peru and Markus Zoecke of Germany beat seeded players Wednesday in the second round of the upset-filled \$182,500 New Zealand Open Tennis Championships.

Yzaga continued his recovery from a career-threatening knee injury to defeat fourth-seeded Spaniard Francisco Clavet 6-4, 7-6 (7-4). Zoecke ousted fifth-seeded Dutchman Paul Haarhuis 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (7-3).

Alexander Volkov of Russia, the No. 3 seed, managed to buck the trend that has been five of the eight seeded players beaten in the first three days of the tournament.

Volkov struggled for three sets in sweltering heat before defeating Mexican Davis Cup player Leonardo Lavalle 6-2, 4-6, 7-5.

German qualifier Markus Naewie continued his excellent run, upsetting Argentine Davis Cup player Javier Frana 6-2, 6-3

and advancing to the quarterfinals of an IBM/ATP Tour event for the first time in his career. The demise of Clavet has left the top half of the draw wide open, without any seeded players left in contention.

Andrei Cherkasov of Russia, the No. 2 seed, Volkov and No. 7 Maliva Washington of the United States are the only seeds left in the bottom half of the 32-man event.

Washington defeated Shuzo Matsuko of Japan 6-3, 6-4 late Wednesday, while Cherkasov downed compatriot Andrei Olhovskiy 6-2, 6-3.

Yzaga has spent three months recovering from a knee injury but played excellent baseline tennis. "Every win is a good win," he said. "I don't really see it as an upset but rather I see every match as a challenge. It's good that I've beaten a great player and it has given me a lot of confidence to keep playing the same way."

170 countries enter for Barcelona summer games

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (AP) — A record 170 teams have entered the July 25-Aug. 9 summer Olympics in Barcelona, the International Olympic Committee said Tuesday.

All national Olympic committees recognized by the IOC accepted the Olympic body's invitations, according to a statement from IOC headquarters that did not list individual countries.

It would make Barcelona the first boycott-free summer games since 1972, reflecting the end of the cold war and political reform in South Africa.

Brunei was the last country to meet the IOC's Dec. 31 postmark deadline, extended from Nov. 25 to give stragglers extra time.

Biafin the fold are South Africa and the Baltic republics Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, all readmitted by the IOC in time for invitation to this summer's

games. East Germany, meanwhile, has disappeared after unification with former West Germany.

The 161 teams at the 1988 games in Seoul, South Korea, set the previous participation record. But several Communist nations, including Ethiopia and Cuba, joined North Korea in staying away then.

The United States and 61 other nations boycotted the 1980 Moscow games to protest the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The Soviet Union and most of the former Communist Bloc retaliated by staying away from the 1984 event in Los Angeles.

A black African boycott linked to South Africa's apartheid racial segregation policy marked the 1976 games in Montreal, Canada. IOC officials could not be reached for further comment.

S. Arabia's Al Nasr beats Al Ramtha 1-0

By Aileen Bannayan

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Al Nasr of Saudi Arabia Wednesday robbed Jordan's Al Ramtha of the chance to qualify for the Asian Cup Winners Cup final when they won the first leg of their semifinal match 1-0 at Al Hassan Sports City Stadium in Irbid.

Although over 15,000 fans cheered them, Al Ramtha played a slow first half and both teams failed to score an early goal.

Al Nasr kept up their continued attacks in the second half while Al Ramtha played with more determination but failed to score except for a 65th minute goal by Khaled Al Aqqawi which was ruled offside by the referee.

Only a minute later Al Nasr's Fahd Al Hureifi scored his team's winning goal after Al Nasr intercepted an attack by Al Ramtha.

Al Ramtha seemed to have lost their zeal and vigour after the goal except for goalkeeper Ahmad Abu Nassouh who stopped a second Saudi goal in the final minutes of the match.

The match was attended by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Minister of Youth Saleh Alshaidat, Her Royal Highness Princess Haya and a number of officials.

Al Ramtha will play the second leg of the semifinals in the Saudi capital, Riyadh, on Jan. 23.

In order to ensure qualifying for the final Al Ramtha must win by scoring two goals. If however they only win 1-0 then the match will go into extra time and later be decided by penalty kicks.

Sanchez clan aims for tennis gold in Barcelona

SYDNEY (AP) — The Barcelona Olympics are shaping up as something special for the Tennis-playing Sanchez family, who are eagerly awaiting the chance to win gold medals before the home fans.

"For our country, it is a very important event," Emilio Sanchez said Wednesday after advancing to the third round of the New South Wales Open with a 6-4, 6-4 victory over Australia's John Fitzgerald.

At 26, Emilio is the oldest of the three touring Sanchez pros. Asked if he had to choose between a Grand Slam title and an Olympic gold medal, the 15th-ranked Sanchez had little hesitation: "Since it is in Barcelona, the gold medal."

His 20-year-old sister, Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, has made similar comments during this warmup for the Australian Open, the two-

week Grand Slam tournament that starts in Melbourne next Monday.

"I just want to move higher in the rankings and get ready for the Olympics, which are very exciting for me," said Sanchez Vicario, No. 5 in the world. "If you win a gold medal, that's great."

It won't hurt that the Olympic tennis event will be held on clay, the surface the Sanchez trio learned to play on.

"It's my favourite surface," Sanchez Vicario said.

Emilio Sanchez, who has done well on other courts, is only a little less enthusiastic, pointing out that the slower surface puts a premium on physical conditioning.

But after winning a silver in the doubles at the Seoul Olympics and getting a taste of the excitement that generated in Spain, he's eager to put in the work.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY JANUARY 10, 1992

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Most everyone will think that they are right today about whatever arises and will place up to defend their viewpoint without any attempt to soft-pedal that urge... Settle problems amicably.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Your hunches are unusually accurate today and you can get rid of whatever obligations have been troubling you with ease, then tonight be gentle with mate.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Until sundown talk out any differences of opinion with your partners and come to an understanding how you jointly want things to be in the future.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Whatever you would like to do that interests you and which can bring you closer to that plan of action that means much to you is fine today.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Now you are able to see clearly how you can gain the good will of those persons of whom you are fond and with whom you want more contact.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) A day to be with your family as much as possible and to do whatever you enjoy together today and then take it easy tonight and just relax.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) There are a number of interesting allies with whom you can discuss and arrive at better fixed conclusions how you can operate with more comfort.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You now find that whatever means the most to you financial can be arranged today with influential persons of a practical and visionary turn of mind.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Whatever you would like to do that means improving your social relations with prominent and up to date men is very good so get their good graces now.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) This is your moment to bring to light the data and information you need from some highly expert persons where it means the most to you.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You now have it in your power to enjoy social parties or other activities with those who like the same recreations as you so make arrangements for such today.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You now are able to find the many outlets by which you can gain the good will of those in high office or position who can aid your popularity.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Listen to what those who have all kinds of ideas and experiences unknown to you have to say and accept the best of these suggestions and put them in use.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMMAM HIRSH

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Financial Markets

Currency	Close New York Date: 7/1/1992	Close Tokyo Date: 8/1/1992
Sterling Pound	1.8868	1.8814
Deutsche Mark	1.5065	1.5095
Swiss Franc	1.3390	1.3425
French Franc	5.1435	5.1605 **
Japanese Yen	123.90	124.40
European Currency Unit	1.3500	1.3464 **

100 Pw STG
European Option at 8:30 a.m. GMT

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.95	3.87	4.06	4.06
Sterling Pound	10.56	10.50	10.50	10.50
Deutsche Mark	9.44	9.44	9.44	9.38
Swiss Franc	7.94	7.94	7.93	7.81
French Franc	9.57	9.47	9.75	9.63
Japanese Yen	5.18	5.12	4.93	4.75
European Currency Unit	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.00

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	350.50	6.70	Silver	9.90	.085

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6730	0.6750
Sterling Pound	1.2645	1.2708
Deutsche Mark	0.4453	0.4475
Swiss Franc	0.5010	0.5035
French Franc	0.1303	0.1310
Japanese Yen	0.5398	0.5425
Dutch Guilder	0.3954	0.3974
Swedish Krona	0.1220	0.1226
Italian Lira	0.0589	0.0592
Belgian Franc	0.02155	0.02166

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7560	1.7650
Lebanese Lira	0.0765	0.770
Saudi Riyal	0.7791	0.1800
Kuwaiti Dinar		
Qatari Riyal	0.18235	0.1833
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2100
Omani Riyal	1.7220	1.7310
UAE Dirham	0.18235	0.1833
Greek Drachma	0.3825	0.3900
Cypriot Pound	1.5525	1.5340

Index	6/1/1992 Close	7/1/1992 Close
All-Share	131.25	133.51
Banking Sector	108.09	111.92
Insurance Sector	151.25	151.40
Industry Sector	165.30	165.53
Services Sector	146.68	147.15

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One Sterling	1.8750/60	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.1427/32	Canadian dollar
	1.5157/67	Deutschmarks
	1.7065/75	Dutch guilders
	1.3480/87	Swiss francs
	31.10/14	Belgian francs
	5.1680/1730	French francs
	114/1145	Italian lire
	124.50/60	Japanese yen
	5.5210/60	Swedish crowns
	5.9610/60	Norwegian crowns
	5.8800/50	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	350.40/350.90	U.S. dollars

Don't go to Tokyo

Brasilia seems a good city for food shopping

WASHINGTON (AP) — A food price survey conducted by the Foreign Agricultural Service indicated that prices in Brasilia are the lowest among 18 capitals surveyed.

The cost of the 15-item market basket surveyed in November was \$27 in Brasilia, with Pretoria and Mexico City next at \$41 and \$42, respectively.

Tokyo increased its lead as the most expensive city, at \$155, outdistancing second-place Stockholm by \$42.

Since the May survey, the dollar cost of the 15-item market basket declined in five of the 10 capitals surveyed, and rose in 13, with the weakening of the dollar being largely responsible for the increase.

Japanese media portrays Bush as shameless salesman

TOKYO (AP) — Japanese media reports are calling President Bush a shameless salesman for an ailing America and a desperate president fighting plunging popularity at home.

"President of U.S.A. Inc." read one sarcastic headline in the national Asahi newspaper that carried a photo of a grinning Bush at a newly opened Japanese branch of U.S. retail giant Toys R Us.

The article disdainfully used the words "cheering squad" to describe the entourage of businessmen accompanying Mr. Bush. Their addition to the visit has proven particularly irksome for the Japanese.

A political cartoon in the Yomiuri daily showed Mr. Bush spreading a huge "furoshiki," a piece of cloth traditionally used to wrap gifts, much to the chagrin of a startled Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa who is carrying a much tinier souvenir package to place inside.

President Bush Wednesday implored Japan to "iron out" trade differences with the United States, but U.S. officials said Japan was "screaming" about pressure to boost sales of American cars and auto parts in Japan.

White House Press Secretary Martin Fitzwater said the United States and Japan were arguing heatedly about targets for Japanese imports of U.S. cars and parts. Mr. Bush, for his part, said that "we're making progress."

Mr. Fitzwater described the talks as "severe."

"We're pressing them hard. They're feeling the pinch and they're screaming about it," he said. "We'll find out where we are tomorrow."

Mr. Bush, in an interview with the U.S.-based NBC broadcasting network before he fell ill, said: "There will be things to point to when we leave here. ...Market access. ...And I think we're going to be successful in that regard."

Mr. Fitzwater said talks would continue through the night, adding: "It's not over yet."

Mr. Bush's chief spokesman made the comments a few hours after Japan's five major automakers unveiled proposals to boost sales of U.S. cars and auto parts in Japan.

The Japanese carmakers said they would try to sell about 20,000 U.S. cars a year in Japan, while Japanese and U.S. officials haggle behind closed doors over what the targets should be for U.S. imports to Japan.

Wednesday's trade talks got off to a rough start, with Commerce Secretary Robert Moshbacher heatedly rejecting Tokyo's proposal for increased purchases of U.S. autos and parts.

"I would be embarrassed to show this to the president," Mr.

Moshbacher fumed to Japan's Trade Minister Kozo Watanabe waving a copy of Japan's offer in his hand, according to one witness.

A U.S. official said the Japanese had made concessions — but not enough.

American businessmen accompanying Mr. Bush also protested that they weren't making headway. The official said the attitude among the businessmen was, "culturally, they'll never change. We'll have to ram it down their throats."

Meanwhile, other U.S. officials said Mr. Miyazawa had expressed sympathy with Mr. Bush's complaints about Japanese trade barriers, but that it appeared unlikely Tokyo would substantially alter its trade policy any time soon.

The two sides produced a joint "strategy for world growth," a plan designed to strengthen the world's economy.

Under it, both countries will take steps to stimulate their own internal economies — Mr. Bush through a package of economic moves he already has said he will announce in his Jan. 28 state of the union speech, and Japan through a plan to increase domestic demand.

Mr. Miyazawa promised a budget designed to increase demand through increased public investment and other measures, to achieve 3.5 per cent growth in a slow economy.

That should lead to a decline in the trade surplus for the 1992 fiscal year because increased domestic demand means Japanese consumers will buy more domestic products, leaving less for export to the United States, said Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady.

Japan's \$41 billion trade deficit with the United States is at the root of U.S. complaints about Japanese trade practices.

Mr. Bush got down to business when he and Mr. Miyazawa met Wednesday with U.S. and Japanese business executives.

The president told the group that the overall U.S.-Japanese relationship was dependent on solving differences over trade so their "big picture" cooperation remains strong.

Mr. Miyazawa said he was looking for "imaginative and creative ideas" to emerge from the talks.

Pressed for specifics about what Japan might do to change its trade practices, presidential adviser Brent Scowcroft told reporters he believes Japan is ready to make changes in its protectionist system.

But he added that "doesn't mean there is going to be necessarily a total transformation in the next weeks or months ahead, but a recognition of the need to take steps."

Algerian business women fear becoming 'factories for babies'

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria's working women fear they are about to become the first targets of a new Islamic order that will force them to live behind the veil.

With visible disgust, they see their careers blighted and their lives turned upside down by the rise to power of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) at the ballot box.

"They (FIS) want to shut us away, turn us into baby factories having child after child after child," said a woman working in an Algiers bank.

"Women are going to pay dearly..." said economic researcher Kharfi Rabea, who believes they have already lost ground since independence from France in 1962.

The FIS came close to taking parliamentary power in the first round of a general election last month and seem certain to do so in the second ballot on Jan. 16. It has pledged to put secular Algeria under Sharia — Islamic

law — but has not spelt out how strictly or quickly it will apply the religious code.

In the absence of a clear programme, working women have visions of losing jobs, contraception being outlawed and their daughters being put in second-class segregated schools.

In the western city of Oran, where the FIS is fighting for three seats in a runoff with the National Liberation Front, the local paper L'Espoir (hope) showed a woman in chains.

Working women fear the FIS will target them for action because it will be an easy, inexpensive way to meet the Islamic militants' clamour for fast change in impoverished Algeria.

Although the FIS draws much support from women who see in it hope for a better life, educated women are prominent in the campaign to stop the FIS.

They base their fears on FIS leaders' statements that women

should stay at home, not waste money on makeup and leave jobs for unemployed youths.

"What are they going to do to show they are working towards an Islamic state, unless they start with getting us out of our jobs?" said a woman office worker who asked not to be named.

Many women in Algeria already wear veils and long robes, and cover their heads. Mini-skirts are unknown.

The militants' charismatic idol, Ali Belhadj, detained by the military since unrest last June, is quoted as saying: "Look at Britain which went into decline the day a woman, God preserve us from it, took the reins of power."

Newly-elected deputy Abdul Kader Moghni told worshippers: "Women, have no fear of Sharia. We are going to protect you like emeralds."

"I don't know details of their

programme but if it touches individual liberties, women will block the way — an army of women," said Yacel Dahbia, 45, who fought unsuccessfully as an independent candidate in December's ballot.

Nicira, 35, who works in a building research office, said: "Many of us have studied for a career. Our job is our achievement..."

The Algerian Women's Movement for Democracy predicts the FIS will plough the government's limited funds into boys' schools while newly-segregated girls wait for new classrooms and fall steadily behind.

Some women see workforce realities saving their jobs but forcing segregation on them. There have already been suggestions that it the new Islamic Algeria, women nurses will no longer care for male hospital patients.

Russia applies for membership in IMF and World Bank

WASHINGTON (R) — Russia Tuesday applied for membership in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, a move that could eventually provide billions of dollars in critical new financing as it fashions a market economy.

"I have the honour to request that the Russian Federation be admitted to membership," Russian President Boris Yeltsin said in a letter to the two international lending institutions.

At the same time, the IMF said that the former Soviet republic of Azerbaijan has applied to join. It is also expected to lodge a membership application with the World Bank.

The largest of the newly formed Commonwealth of Independent States, Russia has already begun the painful process of transforming its centrally planned economy into the beginnings of a capitalist model.

It took its first difficult steps towards a market economy last week when Mr. Yeltsin's government scrapped a broad range of price controls, leading to sharply

higher prices for food and other goods.

It is a process that has been encouraged by both the bank and the fund, which have argued that eventually it will mean a new era of prosperity for the region and bring it in economic harmony with the West.

The membership moves, which had been expected, follow last month's application by the Ukraine, the second most populous former Soviet republic after Russia.

They follow an urging last week by the U.S. government that the IMF and bank give early consideration to membership by states of the former Soviet Union.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady said in a statement last Friday that membership "will further market-oriented reform in these newly independent nations."

The U.S. statement for the time being only applied to Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia, with which it has diplomatic relations.

Severe oil shortage may force Mongolians to ride horses

ULAN BATOR, Mongolia (AP) — A plunge in oil shipments from the former Soviet Union has left this vast central Asian nation with a severe fuel shortage.

Mongolia has less than two weeks of gas and diesel fuel in reserve, according to the State Oil Importing Co., leading one government official to lament: "If there are no oil imports from Russia, we will have to ride horses."

Road and air transport has been reduced, and gas rationing instituted.

The country is almost totally dependent upon Russia for petroleum imports, but Russia's own economic problems caused shipments to Mongolia late last year to drop sharply below agreed levels.

Future supplies are uncertain because the two sides have yet to sign contracts for this year.

For more than 70 years, Mongolia was a close satellite of the former Soviet Union. Two years

of democracy in this landlocked central Asian nation have failed to weaken its dependence on its northern neighbour.

Falling output at Soviet oil refineries last year meant Mongolia got only 570,000 tons of oil — 75 per cent of what it was supposed to.

"Our reserves are at their lowest level in 10 years," said J. Oyungeel, general director of the Mongolian Oil Import and Supply Co.

Remote parts of western Mongolia have only enough fuel for emergency vehicles, she said.

The Mongolian government has indicated it plans to approach international donors for emergency aid to buy petroleum products. Foreign donors have already offered about \$155 million in aid for this year, but very little of it can be used for oil imports.

"We didn't include oil on the list of critical imports when we talked to the donors. Now that

aid is tied up for other imports," said Mr. Doyod, the deputy trade and industry minister, who has led the Mongolian team in negotiations with Russia over oil contracts.

Like many Mongolians, Mr. Doyod only uses one name.

The fuel shortage is adding to the scarcity of food in some areas, especially winter fodder for livestock, according to the ministry of agriculture.

Government transport has been reduced 30 per cent, and rationing limits private vehicles to five litres per week. Gas can be purchased on the black market, but at a 200 per cent premium.

Mongolia's 2.1 million people are spread over a nation over twice the size of Texas.

Mongolia has been negotiating with Russia for a month on this year's oil supply, but it will be at least another month before any contracts are signed. Mr. Doyod said he fears imports may stop in that time.

Even if Russia agrees to sell Mongolia the 750,000 tons it wants, "there is no guarantee the Russians will be able to meet their contracts," said Mr. Doyod.

Mongolia had hoped to get 30 per cent of its fuel imports from other sources this year, but no agreements have been signed.

Officials said China is offering low-quality oil at a price 20 per cent above world levels. Mongolia also is holding talks with oil companies in Singapore, including Shell.

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Nabil Al Mashini Theatre

On Thursday Jan. 2 at 8 p.m. The stars of Haret Abu Awwad family will resume their performances of

Zaman Al Shakiabeh

"Somersault Time"

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New commonwealth divided over control of Black Sea Fleet

MOSCOW (R) — The Commonwealth of Independent States was divided Wednesday over control of the powerful Black Sea Fleet whose top officers refuse to serve under the Ukrainian flag.

The officers are defying a call by Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk for them to swear allegiance to his republic. They say they form part of the Strategic Defence Force that should be under the commonwealth's joint military command.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin told Moscow Radio that the 300-vessel fleet was "indivisible and part of commonwealth strategic forces."

"The Black Sea Fleet cannot belong to any one republic. It has to be subordinate to the joint command," he said before leaving on a tour of provincial Russian cities.

The row casts doubt on the ability of the former Soviet republics to cooperate in ensuring a smooth transition from the old centralised political, economic and military structures.

Western governments have been especially concerned that control over the armed forces, including 30,000 or so nuclear warheads, be clearly established.

The Black Sea Fleet does not have nuclear weapons, and is therefore considered by Ukraine as non-strategic and excluded from the joint military structure. But many of its vessels can be equipped with nuclear arms if necessary.

"The Ukrainian Defence Ministry, in spite of agreements has started laying claim to ships and submarines and is demanding that we swear allegiance to Ukraine soon," deputy commander of the fleet Rear-Admiral Stanislav Alexeyev said.

"Most officers and admirals are against such a decision," he told the newspaper Komsomolskaya Pravda.

Former Chief of Staff of Warsaw Pact forces Vladimir Lobov called for an urgent summit of commonwealth heads of state.

"To put it bluntly, the army is now in a very ridiculous position," he said in a discussion programme shown on Russian Television Tuesday.

"The essence of this position is that the army does not know to whom it is subordinate, whom it is serving, and for whom it is carrying out its military duties," he said.

The sensitivity of the problem was illustrated by a decision to turn back a chartered plane carrying reporters from Moscow to meet Black Sea commanders at their Sevastopol base.

The fleet has servicemen from more than 40 different nationalities whose loyalties may be divided.

There are about 75,000 Russian officers serving in Ukraine, which wants to create its own army based on that of former Soviet forces.

"The Black Sea Fleet should defend the interests of all independent states of the commonwealth," said its commander Admiral Igor Kasatonov, who refused to travel to Kiev for negotiations with Ukrainian officials.

Adm. Kasatonov pledged to follow the orders of Commonwealth Armed Forces Chief Yevgeny Shaposhnikov, who has said Ukraine was violating the agreement on strategic forces reached by heads of state last month.

The newspaper Sovetskaya Rossiya quoted Shaposhnikov as saying at a news conference last weekend that the Ukrainian Defence Ministry had ordered communications be cut between forces on its territory and the central command.

The commonwealth faced discontent on another front as Lithuania protested over military exercises due to the take place in the Baltic state, which is not a member of the commonwealth.

"No manoeuvres of training exercises may be conducted without coordinating them with the Lithuanian government,"

Lithuanian Prime Minister Gediminas Vagnorius said.

TASS News Agency said Lithuania had received only "peremptory" notification from the commander of forces in the former Soviet republic.

Air defence troops were due to hold routine war games, involving air raids and manoeuvres by ground forces near the capital Vilnius.

In Vladivostok the commander of the Pacific Fleet, Admiral Gennady Khvatov, joined his fellow officers in denouncing the Ukrainian move.

"The Ukrainian government has not right to decide the fate of the Black Sea Fleet, which was created and developed by many republics of the former Soviet Union," he told TASS. "The Pacific Fleet's position is clear: We are for a unified navy."

Mr. Yeltsin, 60, was on tour of three towns on the Volga River to assess the impact of last week's price liberalisation in the Russian heartland.

"In addition, the trip will give me an opportunity to see and evaluate the implementation of economic reform and land reform as well as the mood of the people," he told reporters before leaving.

His itinerary was Saratov, south east of Moscow, Ulyanovsk and Nizhny Novgorod (formerly Gorky).

Mr. Yeltsin has pinned his political survival on a series of radical reforms — liberalisation of prices, privatisation of state property and breaking up inefficient collective farms into privately-owned farms.

The price reform, launched on Jan. 2, has sent prices of goods and services soaring by up to 10 times, prompting fierce attacks from conservatives and alarm from pensioners.

But it has so far failed to fill shops with goods.

Meanwhile, the United States said Tuesday it would host a major conference of up to 60

nations and international organisations on Jan. 22 and 23 to coordinate aid for republics of the former Soviet Union.

The conference was proposed by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker last month to discuss ways to help feed and shelter the peoples of the republics through the harsh winter months and to plan for the future.

"The coordinating conference for assistance to the republics of the former Soviet Union will convene at the State Department in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 22nd and 23rd," said State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler Tuesday.

"The purpose of the conference is to better divide our labour and responsibilities to help meet immediate and drastically increasing humanitarian needs in the republics," she said.

Ms. Tutwiler said the list of participants was not yet complete. The conference would be at foreign ministers level and include international financial organisations. In total, there could be as many as 60 participants.

She said work would focus on critical short-term needs of food, medicine, energy and shelter, technical assistance and logistics for distributing aid.

"The coordinating conference will work towards helping the people of the republics help themselves to get through the winter and to ensure that together we take the right steps this winter, spring, and summer, to ensure a better situation next winter," said Ms. Tutwiler.

Foreign ministers from European, Asian and Middle Eastern countries have said they will attend. However, France, which has attacked the plan as a waste of time, has not yet responded to the U.S. invitation.

U.S. officials said the aim is to avoid duplication and to make sure that certain regions of the former Soviet Union are not ignored by aid donors.

Ousted Georgian president refuses to resign

IDZHEVAN, Armenia (Agencies) — Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia said Wednesday he had fled Tbilisi to stop the bloodshed and had not resigned.

"I am not going to resign, I am still the president of Georgia," he told Armenian reporters in his first interview since leaving his besieged parliamentary stronghold Tuesday.

Mr. Gamsakhurdia declared: "We shall continue our fight for legitimacy and justice, for the establishment of constitutional power in Georgia. We shall mobilise public opinion and draw the world's attention."

He was speaking in the Armenian border town of Idzhevan, where he is staying while the rebels who overthrew him negotiate his future with the Armenian government.

Mr. Gamsakhurdia, 52, was forced to flee after two weeks of fighting that killed at least 90 people, wounded several hundred others and battered the centre of Tbilisi, capital of the former Soviet republic.

He denounced the opposition in strong terms, describing them as a gang of criminals, mafiosi and the nomenklatura of former Communist Party apparatchiks.

"Democracy proved weaker than this nomenklatura mafia. It was the result of 70 years of a totalitarian system."

"The mafia has prevailed," Mr. Gamsakhurdia said. "They are leading Georgia to catastrophe and we cannot allow the Georgian precedent to spread to other republics."

Mr. Gamsakhurdia, elected last May with 87 per cent of the vote, has consistently denied opposition charges that he imposed a dictatorship on the Trans-Caucasian republic of 5.4 million people.

Asked what his mistakes had been, he replied: "Perhaps I was too soft on the so-called opposition. All the time I tried to settle my disputes with them through peaceful means. But the criminals never accepted such methods."

Armenian Foreign Minister Raffi Hovannissian said Mr. Gamsakhurdia has not been granted safe haven in Armenia but will not be forced to leave.

Mr. Hovannissian was speaking after a meeting with Secretary of State James Baker at the State Department in Washington D.C.

"He is there pending our intervention," Mr. Hovannissian said. "It is our hope the Georgians will decide what to do with their popularly elected president."

Mr. Hovannissian said he had discussed the situation in Georgia with Mr. Baker and added that Mr. Baker was satisfied with Armenia's position.

The Georgian News Agency Ypirinda quoted acting Georgian Defence Minister Levan Sharashidze as saying that Armenia and the Georgian rebels who ousted the president had agreed that Mr. Gamsakhurdia could remain in Armenia for the time being, but his supporters must be disarmed and sent back.

Meanwhile about 1,000 people defied military leaders Wednesday and rallied in support of Mr. Gamsakhurdia, just one day after soldiers broke up a similar demonstration.

There was no attempt to disrupt the protest, in which people waved red-white-and-black Georgian flags, shouted pro-Gamsakhurdia slogans and held a banner that read in English: "We are for an officially elected president."

The demonstration near Tbilisi's train station lasted about 45 minutes and ended peacefully.

On Tuesday, troops loyal to the new military council that ousted Mr. Gamsakhurdia fired on 4,000 people rallying in support of the president. At least two people were wounded.

Mr. Gamsakhurdia has asked Armenia to help find safe refuge, possibly in the West, for himself, his family and their armed supporters, said the Armenian government's spokesman in Moscow, Mikil Kazaryan.

Like his opponents, Mr. Gamsakhurdia is a Georgian nationalist. But his support has come largely from people living outside Tbilisi, while his opponents have been led by intellectuals in the capital.

The coalition of political leaders who overthrew Mr. Gamsakhurdia has called for election of a new government as early as April.

Former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze is hinting he might join a new government in his native Georgia, whose new rulers stated support for democracy.

ANC turns 80 with call for quick transition

BLOEMFONTEIN, South Africa (AP) — The African National Congress celebrated its 80th birthday Wednesday, closer than ever to its goal of establishing a nonracial democracy.

With President Nelson Mandela heading the show, the ANC held celebrations across the country to mark eight decades of fighting racial discrimination that has allowed five whites to dominate 30 million blacks.

Some 30,000 supporters roared around the infield of a rugby stadium in the central city of Bloemfontein, where the ANC was founded in 1912 as the country's first black political movement.

"It is a reflection of the advances we have made that South Africa is now firmly on the road to democracy," the ANC said in a statement.

The ANC renewed a call for an elected Constituent Assembly this year that would draw up a non-discriminatory constitution.

President F.W. de Klerk has resisted the demand, saying black and white political groups should negotiate the new constitution before polls are held.

In an interview with Cable News Network, Mr. Mandela said Tuesday that the next government must be based "on majority rule in the accepted sense of democratic rule through

out the world."

He said black domination was an objectionable as the current system of white-minority rule.

"It would merely be a reversal of the present position, and we have no intention whatsoever to do that," he said.

Since Mr. De Klerk legalised the ANC and released Mr. Mandela in February 1990, the organisation has established hundreds of branches throughout the country and is easily the strongest opposition force.

Although plagued by poor organisation and sometimes confused policies, most observers believe the ANC would win an election if blacks were allowed to vote.

Meanwhile, a radical anti-apartheid group opposed to American singer Paul Simon's tour Wednesday claimed responsibility for a grenade attack against the concert promoters.

The military wing of the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) threatened further violence if Simon did not call off the tour.

The Tuesday night blast in the Johannesburg building housing Network Productions, which is promoting the tour, shattered windows but did not cause any injuries. Police Col. Frans Malherbe said two grenades were used in the attack, including one of Russian origin.

Cuba captures 3 'terrorists'

HAVANA (R) — Cuba said Wednesday its security forces had captured three armed "terrorists" who landed on the Cuban coast in a dinghy after being dropped off from a boat from the United States.

An Interior Ministry statement said the three "counter-revolutionaries," who all lived in Miami, "belong to a terrorist organisation which operates from U.S. territory and were trained and sent to Cuba to carry out violent acts against the revolution."

The statement, published the official Communist Party newspaper Granma, said the three had landed Sunday, Dec. 29, at El Juncar near Cardenas on the northern coast of the central province of Matanzas.

They were captured with

weapons and incendiary devices, it added.

The statement named the three infiltrators as Eduardo Diaz Betancourt, Daniel Santovenia Fernandez and Pedro de la Caridad Alvarez Pedros.

The yacht that dropped off the dinghy several kilometres off the Cuban coast had sailed from Marathon Key in Florida, it added. The yacht had returned to the United States with its crew.

The three men would be put on trial and family members living in Cuba had been informed, the statement said.

The landing took place just days before the Communist-ruled island celebrated the 33rd anniversary of the triumph of the 1959 revolution led by Fidel Castro that toppled right-wing dictator Fulgencio Batista.

Bangladesh-Burma border talks run into trouble

DHAKA (R) — Talks between Bangladesh and Burma on frontier tension ended in stalemate early Wednesday when Rangoon retracted earlier statements and denied responsibility for a border clash last month, a senior official said.

Officers from the two frontier forces held marathon nine-hour talks into the early hours of Wednesday to try to end a border stand-off involving tens of thousands of troops.

"They are pulling back from what they promised before and trying to shift allegations onto Bangladesh," Additional Foreign Secretary Mahmud Ali said after the talks at the Bangladesh border town of Teknaf.

Bangladesh requested another meeting on Jan. 16 and the military stand-off, Burma failed to respond immediately.

A first round was held on Dec. 31 after Burmese troops attacked a camp of the paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles 10 days earlier, killing a soldier and wounding three.

One civilian was killed and five were injured on the same day in nearby Rezipura village by a bomb believed planted by the attackers.

A military build-up followed, with Burma massing 25,000 troops and Bangladesh placing its navy and air force on alert along the 270 kilometre frontier.

Rangoon initially told Dhaka the attack was a mistake while troops were pursuing Muslim rebels and it promised to return stolen weapons.

"Now they have denied carrying out any attack on our forces and showed little interest on the issue of stolen weapons," Mahmud Ali said Wednesday.

"They have also denied massing troops along the border and instead accused Bangladesh of continuing a military build-up. We have asked for another meeting at a higher level on Jan. 16 but there was no immediate response."

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Imelda Marcos gets cold shoulder from rivals

MANILA (R) — Philippine opposition leaders refused Wednesday to step aside for Imelda Marcos after the disgraced former first lady announced she would run for president in elections next May.

"I'm not giving way to anybody," said President Corason Aquino's estranged Vice President Salvador Laurel after a convention of his opposition Nacionalista Party faction formally endorsed his candidacy Wednesday.

"I'm already committed (to running)," said business tycoon Eduardo Cojuangco, who heads a rival wing of the party.

"She has every right to run, but I've already announced my intentions," the former close business associate of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos said.

Mrs. Imelda Marcos said Tuesday she wanted to run for president in the May 11 polls, heading a unified opposition coalition to help rebuild the country she is accused of plundering with her husband during their 20-year rule.

Launching her attempt to stage a dramatic political comeback after being hounded from the Philippines in a 1986 popular revolt, Mrs. Marcos said she wanted to "save the country from

suffering."

Asked if her entry into the ring would further divide the Philippine opposition, Mr. Laurel said: "Not necessarily, because I am confident that the opposition will eventually unite because we are fighting for the same things."

He told reporters he had yet to decide his choice of vice president, but would "seriously consider" Imelda Marcos as a possible running mate.

A government spokesman said Mrs. Aquino stood firm on her position not to run and would not be drawn into a battle of the widows with Mrs. Marcos.

Mrs. Aquino's husband Benigno was assassinated on returning to the Philippines from political exile in 1983. His widow blames the Marcoses.

In his acceptance speech, Mr. Laurel attacked Mrs. Aquino saying she had betrayed the "people power" revolution that swept her to office.

He said law and order had broken down, the government was unable to deliver basic services and graft and corruption had risen to new heights.

Filipinos were angry "because they are sick and tired of being called a nation of beggars, thieves, prostitutes and maid-servants," he said.

Man bites off more than he can chew

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — Malaysian doctors suspected labourer of swallowing heroin-filled condoms, only to learn he had eaten three whole iguana eggs he thought were good for his health. The day after S. Adinarasan swallowed the eggs, he suffered stomach pains and had to have them surgically removed, the Star newspaper said. When he awoke from the anaesthetic, he found police had handcuffed him to his hospital bed, where he stayed for five days waiting for the results of tests on the contents of his stomach. Kuala Lumpur anti-narcotics chief Othman Talib said: "I don't blame the doctor for suspecting it to be drug because that was what I thought when I saw the eggs."

Monaco cracks down on arranged marriages

MONTE CARLO (R) — Monaco is cracking down on arranged marriages that allow women to enjoy tax-free living and other privileges reserved for citizens of the rich Mediterranean principality. Under a draft law unanimously approved by the 18-member National Council, a foreign woman wanting citizenship will not only have to marry a Monegasque subject, she must also stay with him for at least five years. National Council members say the present system granting instant citizenship on marriage to foreign women — but not men — has been increasingly abused. The 5,000 citizens of the world's second smallest state pay no taxes, have priority in jobs and housing and enjoy special incentives to set up in business. They can also bank in the glamour of a millionaire's playground. Monaco's 30,000 residents include sports stars Boris Becker and Ayrton Senna, singer Shirley Bassey and novelist Anthony Burgess. The draft law will now go to Monaco's ruler, Prince Rainier, for ratification.

Royal plumbers lose jobs at queen's castle

LONDON (R) — Plumbers, carpenters and other workers at Queen Elizabeth's Windsor Castle have lost their jobs to a private firm offering to maintain the historic royal residence more cheaply and more efficiently. A Buckingham Palace spokesman said the 35 workers at the west of London Castle, one of several homes used by Britain's royal family, worked for the government-run Property Services Agency. But the contract to maintain Windsor Castle was put out to tender and the government agency lost.

Thieves snap up sharks' fin before Chinese feasts

SINGAPORE (R) — Chinese gourmets have long claimed sharks' fin soup is worth its weight in gold — and thieves in Singapore have taken them at their word. A restaurant was robbed at the weekend of an edible haul worth 500,000 dollars (\$310,000), including 4.6 tonnes of sharks' fin, the Straits Times reported. Jeff Poon of the Yau Shing Frozen Sharks' Fin Restaurant told the paper the price of sharks' fin had risen by 60 per cent in the past six months — one programme cost 100 Singapore dollars (\$62). Demand is highest around Chinese New Year, which this year falls on Feb. 4.

Thief stuck in chimney

SAINT-MAXIME, France (R) — A burglar spent 14 hours stuck down a chimney, terrified that the owners of the house might inadvertently light a fire and roast him alive. Police in this French Riviera town said Karel Benamor, a young Tunisian, spent Saturday night and Sunday morning unable to move. Firemen used jackhammers to free Mr. Benamor after the owners raised the alarm.

Man detained for selling packaged bricks as VCR

TEHRAN (R) — A pedlar who passed off package bricks as brand new video-cassette recorders was arrested by police after a customer complained, Kayhan newspaper said. Used VCRs are freely traded in Iran but importing new ones requires a special government permit.



James Baker
Baker to visit Armenia

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. Secretary of State James A. Baker has accepted an invitation to visit Armenia, a former Soviet republic seeking close ties with the United States.

Armenia's Foreign Minister, Raffi Hovannissian, made the announcement after an hour-long meeting with Mr. Baker at the State Department.

Mr. Baker will go to Yerevan on a trip at the end of the month that also will take him to Moscow for a foreign ministers' conference on the Middle East.

Armenia would be the sixth member of the new Commonwealth of Independent States to receive U.S. diplomatic recognition since the breakup of the Soviet Union.

"The United States and Armenia will have full diplomatic relations very shortly," Mr. Hovannissian told reporters with a wide smile. "We will be working very closely to establish embassies."

Last month the U.S. administration recognised Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Kyrgyzstan.

Mr. Hovannissian said Nagorno-Karabakh, the predominantly Armenian enclave of Azerbaijan, also was entitled to independent statehood.

He said Azerbaijan had completely blockaded the area, putting it "on the brink of final extermination."

For that reason, the Armenian minister said, the United States is withholding diplomatic recognition of Azerbaijan.

Armenians and Azeris have been at each others' throats for decades, their religious and cultural differences erupting as the two peoples lived side by side.

On another subject, Mr. Hovannissian said Armenia had not granted sanctuary to Zviad Gamsakhurdia.

Kennedy seeks \$210b in defence cuts

BOSTON (R) — Senator Edward Kennedy has added a new proposal to the debate over the post-cold war U.S. military, asking for a \$210 billion cut over seven years to rekindle the economy and boost domestic programmes.

The proposal for deep cuts by the Massachusetts Democrat is part of a growing debate over what the United States will do with its military now that the Soviet threat has collapsed. The debate has been complicated by the U.S. recession and election-year presidential politics.

The proposal, which Sen. Kennedy said he would introduce in the Senate this month, calls for an immediate \$40 billion economic revitalisation package to be spent before October 1992 and be paid for with future defence cuts.

Sen. Kennedy, the Senate's leading liberal, said the collapse of the Soviet Union made the deep cuts possible.

He said it was the "peace dividend," he spent to create jobs, rebuild the U.S. infrastructure, and boost its schools and

health care system.

The Pentagon is already planning to cut the U.S. military from two million to 1.6 million troops as part of defence spending reductions by the end of 1995.

But pressure is mounting in the Democrat-dominated Congress to make even deeper cuts in personnel and weapons. Republican President George Bush has consulted Defence Secretary Dick Cheney and is expected to propose further cuts in his Jan. 28 State of the Union address to Congress.

Reductions in Mr. Bush's new five-year military budget, however, are expected to fall short of those demanded by Gen. Kennedy and other leading Democrats.

Representative Les Aspin, a Wisconsin Democrat who heads the House of Representatives Armed Services Committee, has called for unspecified cuts to reshape the military so it can fight wars like the battle in the Gulf last year.

Mr. Aspin gave no details on how big the new U.S. military

should be or how much it would cost, except to say it must be cheaper than the present \$300-billion-a-year military.

Sen. Kennedy told a news conference at a close military base that White House mismanagement over the past year "has allowed a mild recession to turn into a near depression."

He called for immediate action to break a budget agreement made between the Congress and Mr. Bush, who is expected to be the Republican nominee for president in the November elections, and spend the \$40 billion.

The rest of the proposed outlay, \$170 billion, would be spent between 1993 and 1999, with \$90 billion earmarked for education and job training, 60 billion for health insurance and 20 billion for scientific research and conversion from defence programmes.

A Kennedy aide said the proposal would create some 900,000 jobs nationally, both directly and indirectly.

The money would come from \$210 billion in defence spending cuts over the next seven years.

Expelled Canadian MPs call for China's human rights link with MFN

HONG KONG (R) — Three Canadian members of parliament said Wednesday that their expulsion from China during a human rights visit should send a strong message to the White House not to renew trade privileges for Peking.

The parliamentarians, deported to Hong Kong Tuesday after they visited dissidents' relatives in Peking, also told a news conference that Canada should link aid and trade concessions to China's human rights performance.

After their arrival in the British colony, the Canadians accused Chinese police of kidnapping and roughing them up during their expulsion.

Canadian External Affairs Minister Barbara McDougall protested to China over the incident.

Svend Robinson, leader of the parliamentary delegation investigating Chinese human rights, noted that many members of the U.S. Congress had voted to scrap China's Most Favoured Nation status (MFN) last year. In the end U.S. President George Bush had succeeded in renewing MFN for a year.

"Hopefully this incident will help to reinforce the message of Congress to the president of the United States," said Mr. Robinson. "That's one of the bilateral relationships we will certainly be looking at in Canada as well."

Mr. Bush pushed through China's MFN, which offers lower import tariffs on Chinese goods,

arguing that Peking should not be isolated internationally.

But political analysts say the battle to extend China's MFN this year may be far tougher.

Geoff Scott, a delegation member from the ruling Progressive Conservative Party, said the government would have to decide whether Canada should take economic action against Peking.

"My personal view is... that aid and trade with China should be tied to human rights," he added.

Canada is a major grain supplier to China.

The delegation's third member, Beryl Gaffney, said the question of a concessional credits should be reviewed along with straight aid.

Mr. Robinson said he would call upon the Canadian parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee to conduct a full review of relations with China when it reconvenes in February.

"We had round trip tickets to China. It turned out to be a round trip into hell for a few hours for us," he said.

"But for thousands and thousands of Chinese, they don't have round trip tickets. They continue to be victims of the same thugs we witnessed for a few hours in China."

Mr. Scott said the three had been handed their belongings at Peking airport thrown into plastic rubbish bags.

He also produced a cassette tape recording he said he made whilst being dragged aboard a bus

to the airport by Chinese police. But he refused to play it under an agreement with Canada's External Affairs Ministry.

The Canadian government summoned China's ambassador to protest against the expulsion which it termed an "affront."

"I am particularly offended at this affront to the institution of parliament and the treatment of democratically elected representatives of the Canadian people," Ms. McDougall said.

"We would all like to believe that the Chinese record on human rights is improving but, unfortunately, the Chinese authorities continue to demonstrate no evidence of this."

Senior External Affairs Department officials called in Chinese envoy Wen Yezhan to protest the expulsion and seek an explanation, a spokesman said. Details of the 45-minute meeting were unavailable.

But action by China, one of the largest buyers of Canadian wheat, threatened to cool relations which appeared to be improving following the diplomatic freeze triggered by the 1989 massacre of pro-democracy students in Tiananmen Square.

"If they want to join the world club, they can't do this kind of thing," a government official said. "They have made a major mistake if they think they can treat members of parliament this way. This may have further implications."